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BOUNDARY OF THE LAKE

BY
J. H. BURT

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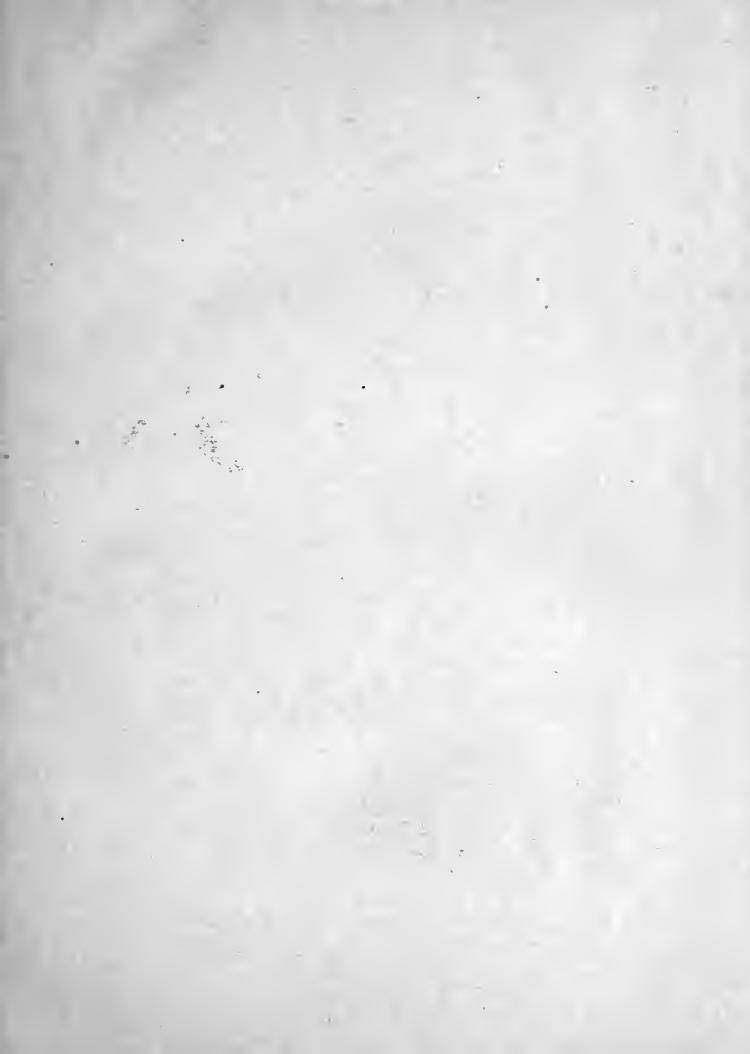


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SIR WALTER SCOTT

(Frontispiece)

Classics in the Grades

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT

With Suggestions to Teachers, Biographical
Sketch, Historical Material, Explanatory Notes

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PREFATORY NOTE TO THE TEACHER

BEFORE the reading of *The Lady of the Lake* is taken up for class work the teacher should make a careful study of the historic facts with which the story deals in order to give a correct interpretation of this great masterpiece. Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* will supply this information in a fascinating form. The geography of the Loch Katrine district will give added interest to the work. This may be supplemented by photographs. While *The Lady of the Lake* will appeal to the ordinary reader, yet a study of it, such as may be required for the class-room, requires some preliminary study on the part of the teacher. This critical study should be of a twofold character: first, the foundations upon which the author built his story; second, references to other poems, similar in character, with which portions of *The Lady of the Lake* may be compared and contrasted. It should be kept in mind that the background of *The Lady of the Lake* is historic. The teacher should be thoroughly familiar with the history of James V of Scotland in order to get into the atmosphere of the poem. In teaching any classic it should be the aim of the teacher to implant in the minds of the pupils a strong desire to read that particular poem.

OUTLINE FOR CLASS READING

A classic improves with each reading, and this poem should be read by the class at least three times.

FIRST READING

The first step in the reading of any classic is to read it as a whole, for the purpose of permitting the pupil to get the thread

of the story. In no sense should this reading be used as a formal reading lesson. We shall make an inevitable failure if we attempt to teach reading in connection with literary appreciation of a classic. The first lessons, then, should require merely an intelligent reading of the poem. The poem should be read aloud in a pleasing manner to get a good understanding and appreciation of the story. Each day's lesson should be so planned that it will stop at some interesting place in order to keep up a sustained interest on the part of the class. When we have read and have grasped the poem as a whole, we are ready for the second reading.

SECOND READING

In reading the poem a second time we should aim to study the mechanical means by which the author secured his effects. In this detailed study the teacher should do all the reading, planning each day's lesson so that it will stop at some logical place in the story. During the second reading the student should form clear conceptions of—

(a) *The Characters*.—Are the people in the poem life-like? Are they real? Can you see them? What are the prominent traits of each character? Who is the hero? the heroine? Which is your favorite character? How many of the characters are real persons? Characterize Ellen and her father; their mutual affection; their solicitude for each other; their pride in each other's excellencies; the father's regret at the obscurity to which fate has doomed his child; the daughter's self-devotion to her father's welfare and safety. Show how Snowdown's Knight, Roderick Dhu, and Malcolm Græme bring out each other's values. In what way do the old minstrel and Dame Margaret win our sympathies? The principal characters are Ellen Douglas, the Lady of the Lake; James Fitz-James, Knight of Snowdown, King James V; Roderick Dhu, Ellen's lover and chief of Clan-Alpine; Malcolm Græme, lover of Ellen; Allan-bane, the seer and harper; and James Douglas, the banished father of Ellen. The subordinate characters are Brian, the seer of Clan-Alpine; Malise,

the messenger; Mad Blanche, of Devon; Red Murdoch, the treacherous guide; Lady Margaret, an aunt of Ellen; and John De Brent, the English exile.

(b) *The Setting*.—Where is the scene of the poem laid? At what time of the year? How many days are covered by the action of the poem? Does the charm lie in the interest of the story or does it lie in its description? Lay stress upon the fact that the rocks, the ravines, the torrents which he treats of are not the imperfect sketches of a hurried traveler, but the finished studies of a resident artist, deliberately drawn from different points of view; each has its true shape and position—a perfect picture. Can you call up mental pictures of the lake and its environment; Ellen's Isle and the silver strand; the gathering and preparation of the Fiery Cross; the parting of Roderick Dhu and James Fitz-James; the sports at Stirling Castle; the Combat and the Battle of Beal' an Duine? Does the poet mention any "local color," that is, objects, customs, and costumes peculiar to the time and place? Do the descriptions of nature surpass the delineations of personal portraits? Select the best descriptions of nature.

(c) *The Plot*.—Is the story interesting? Does it hold your interest? Are there any parts where the interest flags? Does the story lack unity? What is gained by the introduction to each canto? What is the complicating force? What is the first crisis? Name other crises that follow? Where is the interest at the highest (climax) pitch? What is the resolving force? Has the author used "poetic license" in the arrangement of his material?

(d) *The Style*.—Name the colloquial and idiomatic expressions. Select words that are strong and terse; those that are highly polished or ornamental. Of the three qualities of style—clearness, force, and beauty—which is most marked here? Notice that Scott uses many *archaic* words, e. g., *ken*, *caitiff*, *glaiue*, *espial*, *frigate*, *emprise*; also the common use of abbreviations, such as 'gainst, 'twixt, 'scapes, ta'en, 'midst, 'twere, join'st, etc. Call attention to the frequent use of figurative words:

- “Where *danced* the moon on Monan’s rill.”
 “Rock, glen, and cavern *paid* them *back*.”
 “High in his pathway *hung* the sun.”
 “*Embossed* with foam, and dark with soil.”

Name the figures of speech in the above-named sentences.
 Name the figures of speech in the following examples:

- “The huntsman plied the scourge and *steel*.”
 “And weaponless except his *blade*.”

Teach the pupils to recognize the commonest figures of speech.

(e) *Versification*.—The poem is written in fluent iambic tetrameter with an occasional trochee:

“The stag at eve had drunk his fill.”

All introductions or preludes are written in the Spencerian stanza.

(f) *Memory Gems*.—The pupils should be encouraged to select choice passages for memorization and to state the reasons for their selection.

(g) *Collateral Reading*.—The study of this poem should be presented in such an interesting manner as to give the pupil a desire to read other poems of a similar nature for the purpose of comparison and contrast. The following poems are suggestive: Scott’s *Marmion* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*; Longfellow’s *Evangeline* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.

(h) *Composition Work*.—Brief compositions may be written upon selected topics or in reproducing parts of the story. The following list of composition subjects based upon *The Lady of the Lake* may be profitably used in connection with the study of the poem:

- a. The Highlands of Scotland.
- b. Mediæval Minstrelsy.
- c. Robin Hood.
- d. James V of Scotland.
- e. The Fiery Cross.

- f. Loch Katrine and its Environment.
- g. The Games at Stirling Castle.
- h. The Wedding at St. Bride's.
- i. The Meetings of James and Ellen.
- j. Story of the Douglas Family.
- k. Ellen at Stirling Castle.
- l. Blanche of Devon.
- m. The Combat.

THIRD READING

This reading should be free from all criticism, and should be given for the purpose of permitting the student to enjoy the revealed beauty of the poem.

ARGUMENT

The Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO FIRST

The Chase

HARP of the North! that moldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

THE LADY OF THE LAKE was first published in 1810 when Scott was thirty-nine, and it was dedicated to John James, Marquis of Abercorn. Each canto is introduced by one or more Spencerian stanzas, forming a prelude to it. The opening stanzas are an invocation to the harp, an introduction to the whole poem, emblematic of Scottish minstrelsy.

WITCH-ELM (wych-elm): The broad-leaved or wych-elm whose forked branches were used as divining-rods.

SAINT FILLAN: A Scotch abbot of the seventh century, a famous saint who had two springs, in which insane people used to be dipped with certain ceremonies. This one was probably the Holy Pool west of Loch Earn. Scott alludes to this spring in *Marmion*, I, 29.

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,

Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,

When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,

Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.

At each according pause, was heard aloud

Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!

Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;

For still the burden of thy minstrelsy

Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand

That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;

O wake once more! though scarce my skill command

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:

Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,

Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,

The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.

Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

CALEDON (*Caledonia*): The Roman name of Scotland.

ACCORDING PAUSE: Intervals filled in by accompaniment of the harp.

CRESTED CHIEFS: Heraldic device borne on the knight's helmet.

KNIGHTHOOD: Consult a good English history.

MAZE: An intricate way.

WIZARD: A wise man; an enchanter; a magician.

ENCHANTRESS: Scottish minstrelsy.

I

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
 Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
 And deep his midnight lair had made
 In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
 But, when the sun his beacon red
 Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
 The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
 Resounded up the rocky way,
 And faint, from farther distance borne,
 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
 "To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
 The antler'd monarch of the waste
 Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
 But, ere his fleet career he took,
 The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
 Like crested leader proud and high,
 Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky;

SAINTE MONAN was a Scotch martyr of the fourth century; the rill cannot be identified.

LAIR: The bed of a wild beast.

GLENARTNEY: A valley in Perthshire, through which a small stream, called the Artney, flows.

BENVOIRLICH (ben-voil'lk): *Ben* is a Gaelic word and means "mountain."

WARDER: Guard.

FRONTLET: Antlered forehead.

A moment gazed adown the dale,
 A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
 A moment listen'd to the cry,
 That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh;
 Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
 With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
 And, stretching forward free and far,
 Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III

Yell'd on the view the opening pack;
 Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back;
 To many a mingled sound at once
 The awaken'd mountain gave response.
 An hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
 Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
 Their peal the merry horns rung out,
 An hundred voices join'd the shout;
 With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
 No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
 Far from the tumult fled the roe,
 Close in her covert cower'd the doe,
 The falcon, from her cairn on high,
 Cast on the rout a wondering eye,

COPSE: A wood of small growth.

UAM-VAR (Ua-var): A mountain to the northeast of the village of Callander. It was at one time the refuge of robbers.

COVERT: A hiding place.

FALCON (fawk'n): A hawk.

CAIRN: A heap of stones.

Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,
And rous'd the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,
Scarce half the lessening pack was near.
So shrewdly on the mountain side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V

The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern brow,

LINN: A steep ravine; literally, a deep pool.

GALLANT (used as a noun): A brave person.

PACK: A number of hunting dogs kept together.

Where broad extended, far beneath,
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.
 With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
 Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
 And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
 But nearer was the copsewood gray
 That waved and wept on Loch Achray,
 And mingled with the pine-trees blue
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
 Fresh vigor with the hope return'd,
 With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
 Held westward with unwearied race,
 And left behind the panting chase.

VI

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;

MENTEITH (mĕn-tĕĕth): The district in the southwestern part of Perthshire, watered by the Teith.

LOCHARD (lok-ard'): A beautiful lake, about five miles south of Loch Katrine.

ABERFOYLE (ab-er-foil'): A village one and one-half miles east of Loch Ard.

ACHRAY (ăk-ră'): A small lake between Lochs Katrine and Vennachar (ven'a-kar) lying at the foot of Benvenue.

BENVENUE (bĕn-ve-nŭ'): A mountain 2386 feet in height on the southern shore of Loch Katrine.

CAMBUSMORE: The estate of a family named Buchanan whom Scott frequently visited in his younger days. It is about two miles from Callander on the Keltie.

What reins were tighten'd in despair,
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
 Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
 Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
 Few were the stragglers following far,
 That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
 And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
 The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
 That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
 For jaded now, and spent with toil,
 Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,

BENLEDI (bĕn-lĕd'dī): A mountain 2882 feet in height, north-west of Callander.

BOCHASTLE (bō-chās'le): A moorland between the east end of Loch Vennachar and Callander.

TEITH (teeth): A river which flows into the Forth.

VENNACHAR (ven'a-kar): A sheet of water east of Loch Achray; it is about five miles long and one-half mile wide.

BRIGG OF TURK: "A bridge about a mile above Loch Vennachar" (SCOTT).

SCOURGE AND STEEL: Whip and spur.

EMBOSS'D: Ornamented with froth and foam.

While every gasp with sobs he drew,
 The laboring stag strain'd full in view.
 Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
 Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
 Fast on his flying traces came,
 And all but won that desperate game;
 For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
 Vindictive toil'd the bloodhound stanch;
 Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
 Nor farther might the quarry strain.
 Thus up the margin of the lake,
 Between the precipice and brake,
 O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII

The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,
 The lone lake's western boundary,
 And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
 Where that huge rampart barr'd the way;
 Already glorying in the prize,
 Measured his antlers with his eyes;

SAINTE HUBERT'S BREED: A breed of hounds, usually black, named after a noted hunter and abbot, the patron saint of hunters.

QUARRY: The object of the chase; the animal hunted.

BRAKE: A place overgrown with shrubs and brambles.

STOCK: Stumps of trees.

THAT MOUNTAIN: Ben-an, northwest of Loch Achray.

For the death-wound and death-halloo,
 Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—
 But thundering as he came prepared,
 With ready arm and weapon bared,
 The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
 And turn'd him from the opposing rock;
 Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
 Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
 In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
 His solitary refuge took.
 There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed
 Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
 He heard the baffled dogs in vain
 Rave through the hollow pass amain,
 Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX

Close on the hounds the Hunter came
 To cheer them on the vanish'd game;
 But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
 The gallant horse exhausted fell.

DEATH-WOUND: "When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horn being deemed poisonous and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar" (SCOTT).

TROSACHS (trös'äks): The name is applied to the pass between Lochs Katrine and Achray. The word means *rough* or *bristled* country.

AMAIN: At full speed.

The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labors o'er,
Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touch'd with pity and remorse,
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant gray!"

X

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they press'd,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answer'd with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seem'd an answering blast;

THE BANKS OF SEINE: A river of France on which the city of Paris is situated.

DINGLE: A small secluded and embowered valley.

And on the Hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

XI

The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path, in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,

HIED: Hastened.

SHINAR'S PLAIN: The tower of Babel was built on this plain; see Gen. xi, 1-9.

CUPOLA: A small structure standing on top of a dome.

MINARET: A slender lofty tower attached to a mosque.

Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
 Or mosque of Eastern architect.
 Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
 Nor lack'd they many a banner fair;
 For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
 Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
 All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen,
 The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
 And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
 Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
 Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
 Here eglantine embalmed the air,
 Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
 The primrose pale, and violet flower,
 Found in each clift a narrow bower;
 Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
 Emblems of punishment and pride,
 Group'd their dark hues with every stain
 The weather-beaten crags retain.
 With boughs that quak'd at every breath.
 Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;

PAGOD (*pagoda*): A house of idols.

SHEEN: Glittering.

BOON NATURE: Bounteous nature.

EGLANTINE: Sweet-brier.

ASPEN: So called from the trembling of its leaves, which move with the slightest impulse of the air.

Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the Hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,

ATHWART: Against.

GLIST'NING STREAMERS: Spreading branches of the rose and
ivy.

But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

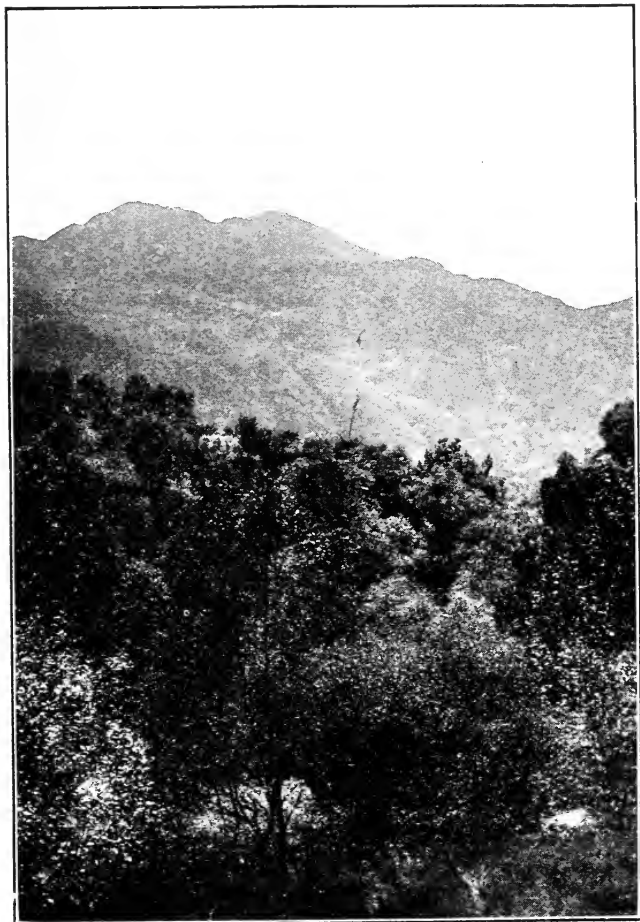
XIV

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,

MOAT: A ditch around the rampart of a castle, sometimes filled with water.

BROOM: A plant having twigs suitable for making brooms to sweep with when bound together.

LOCH KATRINE (kāt'reen): The lake referred to in the title of the poem; situated in the southwestern part of Perthshire; eight miles long and two miles wide.



BENVENCE

And mountains, that like giants stand,
 To sentinel enchanted land.
 High on the south, huge Benvenue
 Down to the lake in masses threw
 Cragg, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
 The fragments of an earlier world;
 A wildering forest feather'd o'er
 His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
 While on the north, through middle air,
 Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV

From the steep promontory gazed
 The stranger, raptured and amazed,
 And, "What a scene were here," he cried,
 "For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!
 On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
 In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
 On yonder meadow, far away,
 The turrets of a cloister gray;

BENVENUE (bĕn-ve-nu'), meaning "mountain." It is surrounded by high mountains and deep ravines. Ellen's Isle is near the outlet in the wild regions of the Trosachs. In *The Fair Maid of Perth* Scott tells us that the lake derived its name from the Catterans, a band of Highland robbers that once infested the region.

HOAR: White.

BEN-AN: A small mountain on the north of Loch Katrine.

CHURCHMAN: An abbot, prior, or other dignitary of the church.

CLOISTER: Convent or monastery.

How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matin's distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell—
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewilder'd stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI

“Blithe were it then to wander here
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that; the war and chase
Give little choice of resting-place;—

LAVE: Bathe.

MATINS: Morning prayers.

BESHREW: A mild implicative; may evil befall.

A summer night, in greenwood spent,
 Were but to-morrow's merriment:
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,
 Such as are better miss'd than found;
 To meet with Highland plunderers here
 Were worse than loss of steed or deer.
 I am alone;—my bugle strain
 May call some straggler of the train;
 Or, fall the worst that may betide,
 Ere now this falchion has been tried."

XVII

But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When lo! forth starting at the sound,
 From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock,
 A Damsel guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow twig to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow.

HIGHLAND PLUNDERERS: "The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighborhood of Loch Katrine were, even till a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their lowland neighbors" (SCOTT).

FALL THE WORST: That is, the worst should happen.

FALCHION: A short curved sword.

The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,
 And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant strain.
 With head up-raised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art,
 In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
 A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
 Of finer form, or lovelier face!
 What though the sun, with ardent frown,
 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
 The sportive toil, which, short and light,
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
 Served too in hastier swell to show
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow:

MONUMENT: Statue.

NAIAD (*nā'yād*): A water-nymph; goddess of rivers and springs.

NYMPH: A goddess of the mountains, forests, meadows, or waters.

GRACE: The Graces were graceful and beautiful goddesses, attendants of Venus, the goddess of love.

What though no rule of courtly grace
 To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
 A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;
 E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
 Elastic from her airy tread:
 What though upon her speech there hung
 The accents of the mountain tongue,—
 Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
 The list'ner held his breath to hear!

XIX

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;
 Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
 Her golden brooch such birth betray'd.
 And seldom was a snood amid
 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
 Whose glossy black to shame might bring
 The plumage of the raven's wing;
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
 Mantled a plaid with modest care,
 And never brooch the folds combined
 Above a heart more good and kind.

MOOD: Studied behavior.

SNOOD: The ribbon which binds the hair of a young unmarried Scottish woman.

PLAID: A striped or variegated woolen cloth called tartan, worn as an overgarment by the Scottish Highlanders. "Plaid" refers to the garment and "tartan" to the pattern.

BROOCH: An ornament for fastening the plaid.

Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unreveal'd,
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
O need I tell that passion's name!

XX

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:—
“Father!” she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
A while she paused, no answer came,—
“Malcolm, was thine the blast?” the name

GUILELESS: Free from deceit.

MALCOLM GRÆME (grāme): A ward of the king. He rebelled to aid the outlawed James Douglas, but was pardoned at the intercession of Ellen Douglas.

Less resolutely utter'd fell,
 The echoes could not catch the swell.
 "A stranger I," the Huntsman said,
 Advancing from the hazel shade.
 The maid, alarm'd, with hasty oar,
 Push'd her light shallop from the shore,
 And when a space was gain'd between,
 Closer she drew her bosom's screen;
 (So forth the startled swan would swing,
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
 Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,
 She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,
 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI

On his bold visage middle age
 Had slightly press'd its signet sage,
 Yet had not quench'd the open truth
 And fiery vehemence of youth;
 Forward and frolic glee was there,
 The will to do, the soul to dare,
 The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
 Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
 His limbs were cast in manly mould,
 For hardy sport or contest bold;

PRUNE: To trim the feathers by plucking the damaged ones.

VISAGE: Countenance.

SAGE: A mark of wisdom.

VEHEMENCE: Rashness.

And though in peaceful garb array'd,
And weaponless, except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheath'd in armor trod the shore.
Slighting the petty need he show'd,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII

A while the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That Highlands halls were open still
To wilder'd wanderers of the hill
“Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pull'd for you;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,

MIEN: Carriage, bearing.

NEED: Food and shelter.

WILDER'D: Bewildered.

PTARMIGAN: White grouse.

HEATH-COCK: Black grouse.

And our broad nets have swept the mere,
 To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
 "Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
 Your courtesy has err'd," he said;
 "No right have I to claim, misplaced,
 The welcome of expected guest.
 A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
 My way, my friends, my courser lost,
 I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
 Have ever drawn your mountain air,
 Till on this lake's romantic strand,
 I found a fay in fairy land."

XXIII

"I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approach'd the side,—
 "I well believe that ne'er before
 Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore;
 But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
 A gray-hair'd sire, whose eye intent
 Was on the vision'd future bent.
 He saw your steed, a dappled gray,
 Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
 Painted exact your form and mien,
 Your hunting-suit of Lincoln green,

MERE: Small lake.

ROOD: By the cross.

LINCOLN GREEN: A cloth made in Lincoln and much worn by hunters.

That tassell'd horn so gayly gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be,
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deem'd it was my father's horn,
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV

The stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprise,
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me, first, the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasp'd an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew;

ERRANT-KNIGHT: A knight who traveled in search of adventure.

SOOTH: True.

EMPRISE: Enterprise.

FRIGATE: A ship of war; here it means a skiff.

With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV

The stranger view'd the shore around;
'Twas all so close with copsewood bound,
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain-maiden show'd
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And open'd on a narrow green,

ROCKY ISLE: "It is a little island, but very famous in Romance Land as 'Ellen's Isle'; for Ellen . . . was the name of 'The Lady of the Lake.' It is rather high and irregularly pyramidal. It is mostly composed of dark gray rocks, mottled with pale and gray lichens, peeping out here and there amid trees that mantle them—chiefly light, graceful birches, intermingled with red-berried mountain ashes and a few dark-green, spiry pines. The landing is beneath an aged oak; and, as did the Lady and the Knight, the traveler now ascends 'a clambering unsuspected road,' by rude steps, to the small irregular summit of the island. A more poetic, romantic retreat could hardly be imagined; it is unique. It is completely hidden not only by the trees, but also by an undergrowth of beautiful and abundant ferns and the loveliest of heather" (HUNNEWELL'S *Lands of Scott*).

Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground;
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

XXVI

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine-trees, overhead,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And wither'd heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,

DESTINED: Desired.

IDÆAN VINE: Some editors have taken this to refer to the red whortleberry, but as this is not a climber, it refers more probably to the common vine.

The clematis, the favor'd flower
 Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
 And every hardy plant could bear
 Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
 An instant in this porch she stayed,
 And gayly to the stranger said,
 "On heaven and on thy lady call,
 And enter the enchanted hall!"—

XXVII

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
 My gentle guide, in following thee."—
 He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
 Of angry steel that instant rang.
 To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
 But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,
 When on the floor he saw display'd,
 Cause of the din, a naked blade

THY LADY CALL: Scott says, in his *Essay on Chivalry*, "Their oath bound the new-made knights to defend the cause of all women without exception; and the most pressing way of conjuring them to grant a boon was to implore it in the name of God and the ladies. But it was not enough that the 'very perfect, gentle knight' should reverence the fair sex in general. It was essential to his character that he should select, as his proper choice, 'a lady and a love,' to be the polar star of his thoughts, the mistress of his affections, and the directress of his actions. In her service he was to observe the duties of loyalty, faith, secrecy, and reverence. Without such an empress of his heart, a knight, in the phrase of the times, was a ship without a rudder, a horse without a bridle, a sword without a hilt."

Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised;—
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
“I never knew but one,” he said,

DUN: Dark brown.

GARNISH: Decorate.

"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
 A blade like this in battle-field."
 She sigh'd, then smiled, and took the word;
 "You see the guardian champion's sword:
 As light it trembles in his hand,
 As in my grasp a hazel wand;
 My sire's tall form might grace the part
 Of Ferragus or Ascabart;
 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials old."

XXIX

The mistress of the mansion came,
 Mature of age, a graceful dame;
 Whose easy step and stately port
 Had well become a princely court,
 To whom, though more than kindred knew,
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due.

BROOK TO WIELD: Here means "was able."

FERRAGUS OR ASCABART: "These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. . . . Ascabart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the *History of Bevis of Hampton*, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of the gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Bevis himself" (SCOTT).

TO WHOM, THOUGH MORE THAN KINDRED KNEW: She was the maternal aunt of Ellen, but was loved as a mother.

Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unask'd his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names,
"The Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fall'n in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning, with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

MEET: Proper.

RITE: Ceremony.

UNASK'D HIS BIRTH AND NAME: "The Highlanders are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name and lineage before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them that a contrary rule would, in many cases, have produced the discovery of some circumstance which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of" (SCOTT).

XXX

Fain would the Knight in turn require
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.
 Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
 That courts and cities she had seen;
 Ellen, though more her looks display'd
 The simple grace of sylvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Show'd she was come of gentle race.
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turn'd all inquiry light away:—
 “Weird women we! by dale and down
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spell we cast;
 While viewless minstrels touch the string,
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing.”
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Fill'd up the symphony between.

SNOWDOWN: The old name of Stirling Castle.

WEIRD WOMEN: Skilled in witchcraft.

HARP UNSEEN: “The Highlanders delight much in music, but chiefly in harps of their own fashion. The strings of the harps are made of sinews; . . . they take great pleasure to deck their harps with silver and precious stones” (SCOTT).

XXXI

Song

"Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking:
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall,
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting-fields no more:
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armor's clang or war-steed champing,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
 Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
 At the day-break from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 Booming from the sedgy shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here,

SOLDIER, REST: The meter is trochaic.

PIBROCH: A wild Highland air played upon the bagpipes.

BITTERN: A species of heron or wading bird.

WARDERS: Sentinels.

Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

XXXII

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

Song Continued

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest; thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillé."

CADENCE: Modulation of the voice.

REVEILLÉ (re-vāl'yā): The bugle blast about break of day to give notice that it is time for the soldiers to rise.

XXXIII

The hall was clear'd—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dream'd their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honor's lost.
Then,—from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again return'd the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view—
O were his senses false or true!

Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now!

XXXIV

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seem'd to walk, and speak of love;
She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recall'd the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fix'd his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

GAUNTLET: A glove of such material that it defends the hands from wounds.

XXXV

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume:
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,
The aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passions' sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:—
“Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?—
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more.”—
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

The Island

I

AT morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd Allan-
bane!

II

Song

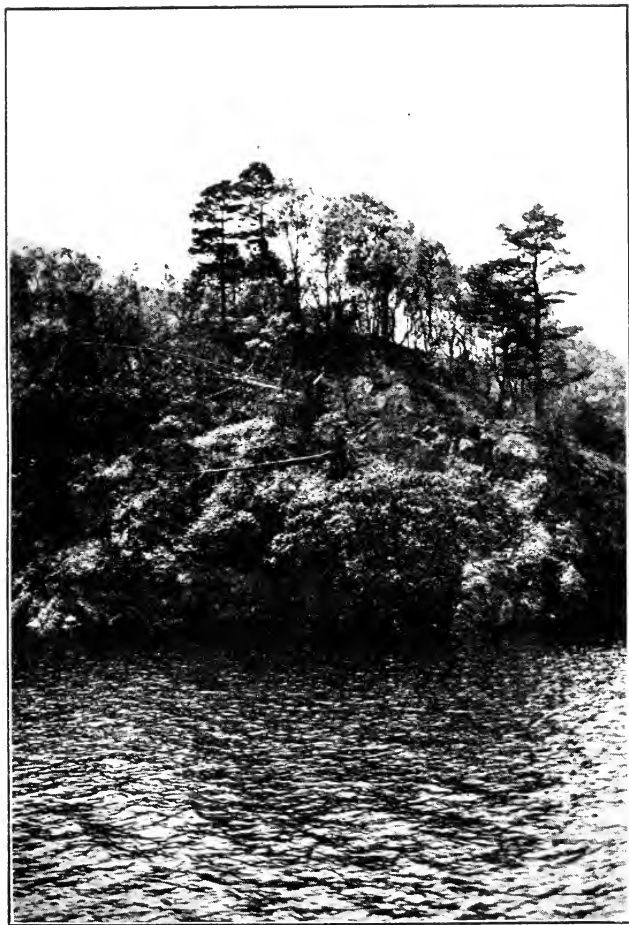
“Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,

BLACK-COCK: The black grouse.

JETTY: Jet black.

LINNET: A small song bird.

MINSTREL GRAY: A minstrel was retained by a Highland chieftain whose duty it was to extol in verse and song the triumphs of his clan.



ELLEN'S ISLE

Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
 Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

“High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battled line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
 The honor'd need be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III

Song Continued

“But if beneath yon southern sky
 A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
 Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap ere while,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

“Or if on life’s uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.”

IV

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reach’d the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The Harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, gray, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seem’d watching the awakening fire;
So still he sate, as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;

THE HARPER ON THE ISLET BEACH: “This picture is touched with the hand of the true poet” (JEFFREY).

So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair;
 So still, as life itself were fled
 In the last sound his harp had sped.

V

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,
 Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach?
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
 Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose?—
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
 And stop and turn to wave anew;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
 And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI

While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
 It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not;

Was it a breach of fidelity to Malcolm that Ellen showed some interest in the stranger?

HIS FLEET: Fleet of ducks.

But when he turn'd him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made;
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell,
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill;
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid.—
“Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish Maid!”
’Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,
“Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye,
Another step than thine to spy.—
Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried,
To the old Minstrel by her side,
“Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme!”—

THE GLORY OF THE GRÆME: “The Græmes (Grahams) were a powerful family that held possessions in Dumbartonshire and Stirlingshire. Few families can boast of more historical renown,

Scarce from her lip the word had rush'd,
 When deep the conscious maiden blush'd;
 For of his clan in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII

The minstrel waked his harp—three times
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died.
 “Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,”
 Clasping his wither'd hands, he said,
 —“Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain,
 Though all unwont to bid in vain.
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand
 Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann'd!
 I touch the chords of joy, but low
 And mournful answer notes of woe;

having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in Scottish history. Sir John Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labors and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Ratz saw realized his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigor with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as the third John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the Non-Conformists during the reign of Charles II and James II” (SCOTT).

And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.—
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd,
Can thus its master's fate fortell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII

“But ah! dear lady, thus it sigh'd,
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wail'd loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,

HARP, WHICH ERST SAINT MODAN SWAYED: “I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment, for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound” (SCOTT).

ERST: Formerly.

BOTHWELL'S BANNER'D HALL: The picturesque ruins of Bothwell Castle stand on the banks of the Clyde about nine miles from Glasgow. It is now in ruins.

Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—
Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe,
My master's house must undergo,
Or ought but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow,
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die!"

IX

Soothing she answer'd him,—“Assuage,
Mine honor'd friend, the fears of age;

DOUGLASSES: “The Douglas family had been exceedingly powerful ever since the great wars with England, when James Douglas had been the chief friend of Bruce, the champion of national independence. The Earls of Douglas and of Angus, with their many relatives, had since grown so powerful and unscrupulous as to be the terror of kings and people; so that it was said that no justice could be obtained against a Douglas or a Douglas's man. Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, had married Margaret Tudor, the mother of James V, and the young king in his boyhood had been held in such subjection that when at last he made his escape from the numerous Douglasses who guarded and watched him, he hated the very name of the family, and banished every one of them, including a brave old man, Douglas of Kilspindie, who had been a great favorite with him in his childhood, and from whom the character of the Douglas of the poem is taken” (YONGE).

All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resign'd,
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
Pluck'd a blue harebell from the ground,—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the King's own garden grows;

TWEED TO SPEY: The country bounded by the Tweed on the south and the Spey on the north, *i. e.*, from one end of the land to the other.

HAREBELL: The bluebell of Scotland.

LEA: Meadow.

And when I place it in my hair,
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair."—
 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

X

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
 Wiled the old harper's mood away.
 With such a look as hermits throw
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrill'd to a tear, then thus replied:
 "Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
 The rank, the honors, thou hast lost!
 O might I live to see thee grace,
 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
 To see my favorite's step advance,
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eye,
 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"

THE LADY OF THE BLEEDING HEART: The *Bleeding Heart* was the cognizance of the Douglas family. Robert Bruce on his death-bed bequeathed his heart to his friend, the good Lord James, to be borne in war against the Saracens. In a battle with the Moslems Douglas was slain, but his body was recovered and in the end he was laid with his ancestors, and the heart of Bruce was deposited in the church of Melrose Abbey.

XI

“Fair dreams are these,” the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sigh’d,)
“Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy;
Nor would my footsteps spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel’s lay as thine.
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye,—
Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine’s pride,
The terror of Loch Lomond’s side,
Would, at my suit, thou know’st, delay
A Lennox foray—for a day.”—

STRATHSPEY: A lively Scottish dance, common in the *strath* or valley of the river Spey.

CLAN-ALPINE: The descendants of Alpine, an ancient king of Scotland.

LOCH LOMOND (lō’mōnd): The pride of Scottish lakes, twenty-three miles long and five miles wide. On one of the many islands at the southern end of the lake was the burial-place of Clan-Alpine.

A LENNOX FORAY: A raid for plunder in the domain of the Lennox family. This family dwelt south of Loch Lomond and gave their name to that district.

XII

The ancient bard his glee repress'd;
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;
 And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dared give,—ah! woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer,
 Even the rude refuge we have here?
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;

BLACK SIR RODERICK: Roderick Dhu was called the "black."

IN HOLY-ROOD: "This was no uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were a perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility" (SCOTT).

THE DOUGLAS: This refers to the exile of the Douglasses during the reign of James V.

GUERDON: Reward.

Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit, from Rome he brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear;
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear
That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
Thy hand is on a lion's mane."—

XIII

“Minstrel,” the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
“My debts to Roderick's house I know;
All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child;
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's kind who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life,—but not my hand.

DISPENSATION: As Roderick and Ellen were cousins, a dispensation from the Pope was necessary for them to marry.

Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
 A votaress in Maronnan's cell;
 Rather through realms beyond the sea,
 Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
 An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
 Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses gray—
 That pleading look, what can it say
 But what I own?—I grant him brave,
 But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
 And generous—save vindictive mood
 Or jealous transport chafe his blood:
 I grant him true to friendly band,
 As his claymore is to his hand;
 But O! that very blade of steel
 More mercy for a foe would feel:

VOTARESS: One consecrated by a vow to devote her life to good works.

MARONNAN'S CELL: "The parish of Kilmarnock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel dedicated to Saint Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered" (SCOTT).

BRACKLINN: "This is a beautiful cascade made at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn by a mountain stream, called the Keltie, about a mile from the village of Callander in Monteith" (SCOTT).

CLAYMORE: A Highland broadsword.

I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought,
I honor, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughter'd in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden gown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air:
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"—

XV

“What think I of him?—woe the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!

Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self-unsceabbarded, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe.
 If courtly spy hath harbor'd here,
 What may we for the Douglas fear?
 What for this island, deem'd of old
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray
 What yet may jealous Roderick say?
 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,
 Bethink thee of the discord dread
 That kindled when at Beltane game
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme:
 Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
 Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
 No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,

TINE-MAN: This refers to Archibald, the third earl of Douglas, who was so unfortunate that he acquired the epithet of *tine-man* because he *tined* or lost his followers in every battle.

BORDER: Douglas allied himself with his spearmen to Percy Hotspur, whose men were armed with cross-bows.

BELTANE GAME: Beltane (Beal-tein, or the fire of Beal), a Gaelic name for the sun. It was celebrated by bonfires on the hilltops and by dances and merry making in front of them.

Still is the canna's hoary beard,
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
 And hark again! some pipe of war
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar.”—

XVI

Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
 Four darkening specks upon the tide,
 That, slow enlarging on the view,
 Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
 And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
 Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
 The point of Brianchoil they passed,
 And, to the windward as they cast,
 Against the sun they gave to shine
 The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine.
 Nearer and nearer as they bear,
 Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
 Now might you see the tartans brave,
 And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
 Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
 As his tough oar the rower plies;

GLENGYLE: A valley at the northern end of Loch Katrine.

BRIANCHOIL: A promontory on the southern side of Loch Katrine.

BANNER'D PINE: The emblem or badge of Clan-Alpine and also of the Macgregors.

TARTANS: Checkered woolen cloth worn in Scotland.

BONNETS: The Tam O'Shanter caps worn by men.

See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
 The wave ascending into smoke;
 See the proud pipers on the bow,
 And mark the gaudy streamers flow
 From their loud chanters down, and sweep
 The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
 As, rushing through the lake amain,
 They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
 And louder rung the pibroch proud.
 At first the sound, by distance tame,
 Mellow'd along the waters came,
 And, lingering long by cape and bay,
 Wail'd every harsher note away,
 Then bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
 Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
 Of Old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
 Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
 And hurrying at the signal dread,
 The batter'd earth returns their tread.
 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
 Express'd their merry marching on,
 Ere peal of closing battle rose,
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;

STREAMERS: Ribbons used to ornament the bagpipes.

CHANTERS: The pipes which sound the tenor in the bagpipes.

And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarr'd;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yell'd amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII

The war pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
"Roderich Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near, and nearer as they row'd,
Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

CLARION: A kind of instrument whose note is shrill and clear.

XIX

Boat Song

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!

Honor'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine!

Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,

Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!

Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,

While every Highland glen

Sends our shout back agen,

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;

When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the
mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.

Moor'd in the rifted rock,

Proof to the tempest's shock,

Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow:

Mentieth and Breadalbane, then,

Echo his praise agen,

“Roderich Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!”

BOURGEON: To bud.

BELTANE: Whitsuntide (May 1st).

BREADALBANE: The district between Lochs Lomond and Tay.

RODERICH VICH ALPINE DHU: Vich, descendant; dhu, black. Besides his ordinary name and surname every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan.

XX

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.
 Widow and Saxon maid,
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear agen,
 "Roderich Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!
 O that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthy such noble stem,
 Honor'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then
 Ring from her deepest glen,
 "Roderich Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

GLEN FRUIN: A valley on the southwest of Loch Lomond. The ruins of Castle Bannochar still overhang the entrance to the glen.

GLEN LUSS AND ROSS-DHU, LEVEN-GLEN, BANNOCHAR: The names of different valleys bordering upon Loch Lomond.

AND THE BEST OF LOCH LOMOND: This line refers to the battle which was fought between the clan Macgregor on the one side and the Colquhouns on the other. The Colquhouns were defeated with great slaughter.

XXI

With all her joyful female band,
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw,
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! A Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor's brow?"
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obey'd,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain-side."—
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay.
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven:
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely press'd,
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
Though 'twas an hero's eye that weep'd.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Mark'd she, that fear (affection's proof)
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII

Allan, with wistful look the while,
Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,

"Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
 I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,
 While many a minstrel answer'd loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
 Though the waned crescent own'd my might,
 And in my train troop'd lord and knight,
 Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome give more kind and true
 Than aught my better fortunes knew.

PERCY'S NORMAN PENNON: A trophy taken by the Douglas in the year 1388 in the battle of Otterburn in Northumberland, and furnishes the theme of the ballads of *Chevy Chase*.

WANED CRESCENT: The interpretation is in doubt. It probably refers to the Buccleugh family (one of Scott's ancestors whose shield bore a crescent moon) who were defeated in their attempt to restore the king.

BLANTYRE: An ancient abbey near Bothwell Castle.

Forgive, my friend, a father's boast;
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favorite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweigh'd her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.

The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.
Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy:
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer:
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,
As play'd the feather on his crest.
Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI

Now back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late return'd? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'Tis mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm, as I stray'd
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
Nor stray'd I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risk'd life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."

GLENFINLAS: A valley to the northeast of Loch Katrine.

ROYAL WARD: Græme was under the protection of the king, and he ran the risk of incurring the king's displeasure in rendering assistance to Douglas.

SPLEEN: Quarrels.

STRATH-ENDRICK: A valley drained by Endrick Water south-east of Loch Lomond.

XXVII

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
 Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,
 Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
 Fail'd aught in hospitality.
 In talk and sport they whiled away
 The morning of that summer day;
 But at high noon a courier light
 Held secret parley with the knight,
 Whose moody aspect soon declared
 That evil were the news he heard.
 Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head;
 Yet was the evening banquet made,
 Ere he assembled round the flame,
 His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
 And Ellen too; then cast around
 His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground,
 As studying phrase that might avail
 Best to convey unpleasant tale.
 Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
 Then raised his haughty brow, and said:—

XXVIII

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
 Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
 Kinsman and father,—if such name
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim:

PARLEY: Conference.

GLOZING: Flattering; that which glosses over the truth.

Mine honor'd mother;—Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?—
And Græme; in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land,—
List all!—The King's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared;
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless, and so ruthless known,

TAMED THE BORDER-SIDE: "In 1529 James V made a convention at Edinburgh, for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances. An expedition was accordingly formed, and many of the most noted freebooters were seized and executed" (SCOTT).

MEGGAT, YARROW, ETRICK, TEVIOT: Streams in the southern part of Scotland which flow into the Tweed.

Now hither comes; his end the same,
 The same pretext of sylvan game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
 By fate of Border chivalry.
 Yet more; amid Glenfinlas green,
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
 This by espial sure I know:
 Your counsel in the streight I show.”—

XXIX

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's eye,
 Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
 This to her sire, that to her son.
 The hasty color went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme,
 But from his glance it well appear'd,
 'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd;
 While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
 The Douglas thus his counsel said:
 “Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass o'er;
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy bower;
 For well thou know'st, at this gray head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.

PRETEXT: Excuse.

ESPIAL: By means of spies.

STREIGHT: Difficulty.

ROYAL BOLT: Anger of the king.

For thee, who, at thy King's command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant band,
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,
 Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.
 Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
 Ellen and I will seek, apart,
 The refuge of some forest cell,
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
 Till, on the mountain and the moor,
 The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er."—

XXX

"No, by mine honor," Roderick said,
 "So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
 No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
 My father's ancient crest, and mine,
 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
 Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 Will friends and allies flock enow;
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
 And, when I light the nuptial torch,

LINKS OF FORTH: The windings of the river Forth at Stirling.
 STIRLING'S PORCH: The gate of Stirling Castle.

A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
 —Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
 I meant not all my heart might say.—
 Small need of inroad, or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,
 Shall bootless turn him home agen.”

XXXI

There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er
 The ocean tide's incessant roar,
 Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till waken'd by the morning beam;
 When dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around,
 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,

BLENCH: Shrink, start.

BATTLED FENCE: A strong wall or battlement built for defence.

Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
By crossing terrors wildly toss'd,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
Where death seem'd combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
“Roderick, enough! enough!” he cried,
“My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.

'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
 To rein a steed and wield a brand;
 I see him yet, the princely boy!
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
 I love him still, despite my wrongs,
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
 O seek the grace you well may find,
 Without a cause to mine combined."

XXXIII

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
 The waving of his tartans broad,
 And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
 With ire and disappointment vied,
 Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
 Like the ill Demon of the night,
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
 Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
 But, unrequited Love! thy dart
 Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
 And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
 At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
 While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,
 With bitter drops were running o'er.

I LOVE HIM STILL: Douglas here asserts his loyalty toward the young king.

PINIONS: Wings.

ENVENOM'D: Poisoned.

The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreathes, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,
"Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delay'd."
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.

“Perish my name, if aught afford
Its Chieftain safety, save his sword!”
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength:—“Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fall’n so far,
His daughter’s hand is deem’d the spoil
Of such dishonorable broil!”
Sullen and slowly, they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick’s mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen’s scream,
As falter’d through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veil’d his wrath in scornful word:
“Rest safe till morning; pity ’twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air!

CHEEK: A charge of effeminacy against Malcolm.

Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
Malise, what ho!”—his henchman came;
“Give our safe-conduct to the Græme.”
Young Malcolm answer’d, calm and bold,
“Fear nothing for thy favorite hold;
The spot an angel deign’d to grace
Is bless’d, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his back,
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
Naught here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour”——
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

HENCHMAN: “This officer was a sort of secretary who was expected to be ready on all occasions to hazard his life for his master. At drinking bouts he stood behind his seat, at his haunch, whence the title is derived, and watched the conversation to see if any one offended his patron” (SCOTT).

XXXVI

Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's command),
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,
From those who to the signal came;
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.

FIERY CROSS: "When a chieftain designed to summon his clan upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the Cross of Shame, because disobedience to what the symbol implied inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal despatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbors, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal" (SCOTT).

He gave his counsel to the wind,
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll'd,
 His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
 And stripp'd his limbs to such array,
 As best might suit the watery way.

XXXVII

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
 Pattern of old fidelity!"
 The Minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,—
 "O! could I point a place of rest!
 My sovereign holds in ward my land,
 My uncle leads my vassal band;
 To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
 Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
 Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
 Who loves the Chieftain of his name,
 Not long shall honor'd Douglas dwell,
 Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
 Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber dare,—
 I may not give the rest to air!
 Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him naught,
 Not the poor service of a boat,
 To waft me to yon mountain-side."—
 Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
 Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
 And stoutly steer'd him from the shore;
 And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
 Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.

Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD

The Gathering

I

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless
course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II

The Summer dawn's reflected hue
 To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
 Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
 The mountain-shadows on her breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemm'd with dewdrops, led her fawn;
 The gray mist left the mountain side,
 The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
 Invisible in fleckèd sky,
 The lark sent down her revelry;
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
 In answer coo'd the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.

COY: Shy.

CHALICE: Cup or goblet.

CUSHAT DOVE: Ring-dove.

With sheathèd broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such Antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV

A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;

His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.
The hallow'd creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase call'd off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,

BENHARROW: A mountain at the head of Loch Lomond.

DRUID: That is, showed Druid severity.

STRATH: A broad river valley.

Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreath'd with chaplet, flush'd and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade;
—She said no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;

SNOOD: "The snood, or riband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair had an emblematic signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the curch, toy, or coif when she passed, by marriage, into the matron state' (SCOTT).

Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite,
But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain the learning of the age
Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,

PHANTOM SIRE: Ghostly father.

CABALA (kă'ba-la): Mysteries or black art.

And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride;
Till, with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the River Demon rise;
The mountain mist took form and limb,
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swell'd with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death:

RIVER DEMON: "The river demon, or river-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession, with all its attendants" (SCOTT).

HAG: An ugly old woman.

GOBLIN: An evil spirit.

Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurl'd,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind;
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine lineage came.
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
 Of charging steeds, careering fast
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
 The thunderbolt had split the pine.—
 All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
 He girt his loins, and came to show
 The signals of impending woe,
 And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII

'Twas all prepared;—and from the rock,
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock,

DISEMBODIED WORLD: World bereft of human beings.

BEN-SHIE (ban'shee): "A female spirit that heralds or foretells death. Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar or, rather, a domestic spirit attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated by its wailings any approaching disaster. Ben-Shie implies a female fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families" (SCOTT).

PATRIARCH: Leader, father.

Before the kindling pile was laid,
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
 Patient the sickening victim eyed
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
 Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
 A slender crosslet form'd with care,
 A cubit's length in measure due;
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
 Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
 The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high,
 With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,
 While his anathema he spoke:

IX

"Woe to the clansman, who shall view
 This symbol of sepulchral yew,

CROSSLET: A small cross.

CUBIT'S LENGTH: Eighteen inches.

INCH-CAILLIACH: The Isle of Nuns is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond.

SYMBOL: Sign.

SEPULCHRAL YEW: Evergreen trees growing in graveyards or over graves.

Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
 On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
 Shall doom him wrath and woe."
He paused;—the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook:
 And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his muster'd force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
 "Woe to the traitor, woe!"
Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X

The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his mutter'd spell:

EXECRATION: Curse.

STROOK: Obsolete form of struck.

BEN-AN'S GRAY SCALP: Bare rocky summit.

Dismal and low its accents came,
 The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
 And the few words that reach'd the air,
 Although the holiest name was there,
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
 But when he shook above the crowd
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:
 "Woe to the wretch who fails to rear
 At this dread sign the ready spear!
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,
 His home, the refuge of his fear,
 A kindred fate shall know;
 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
 While maids and matrons on his name
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
 And infamy and woe."
 Then rose the cry of females, shrill
 As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
 Denouncing misery and ill,
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
 Of curses stammer'd slow;
 Answering, with imprecation dread,
 "Sunk be his home in embers red!
 And cursèd be the meanest shed
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head
 We doom to want and woe!"

SCATHED: Charred.

INFAMY: Public disgrace.

GOSS-HAWK (*goosehawk*): A brown hawk.

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
 And the gray pass where birches wave
 On Beala-nam-bo.

XI

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
 And hard his laboring breath he drew,
 While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
 And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,
 He meditated curse more dread,
 And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
 Who, summon'd to his Chieftain's aid,
 The signal saw and disobey'd.
 The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,
 He quench'd among the bubbling blood,
 And, as again the sign he rear'd,
 Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
 "When flits this Cross from man to man,
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,

COIR-URISKIN (cōr-ū'ris-kin): "A hollow cleft in the northern side of Benvenue, supposed to be haunted by fairies and evil spirits. It is surrounded by rocks and overshadowed by birch-trees, so as to give complete shelter. The Urisk is the equivalent of the Grecian Satyr, having a human form with goat's feet" (TAYLOR).

BEALA-NAM-BO (beal-a-nam-bo'): "A glade on the mountain side frequented by cattle, or the pass of cattle. It is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin" (SCOTT)

Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"
He ceased; no echo gave agen
The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
High stood the henchman on the prow;
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,

GORE: Blood.

LANRICK MEAD: A meadow to the west of Loch Vennachar.

When it had near'd the mainland hill;
 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom wide
 When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
 On fleeter foot was never tied.
 Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
 Thine active sinews never braced.
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its crest;
 With short and springing footstep pass
 The trembling bog and false morass;
 Across the brook like roebuck bound,
 And thread the brake like questing hound;
 The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
 Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
 Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
 Yet by the fountain pause not now;
 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
 Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
 The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
 Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,

THREE FATHOM: Eighteen feet.

SCAUR: Bare face of a cliff.

Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

XIV

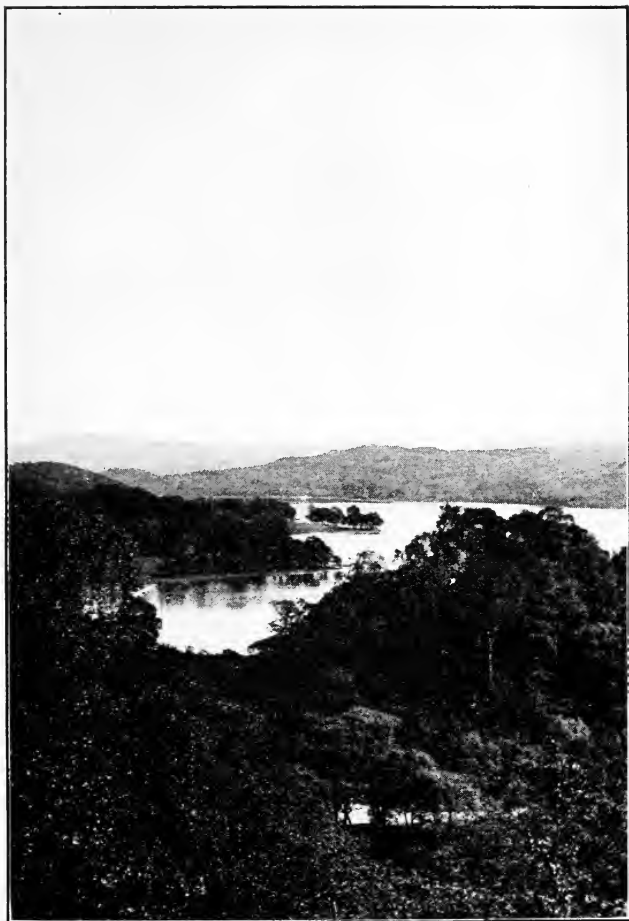
Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They pour'd each hardy tenant down.
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace;
He show'd the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamor and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changèd cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe;
The herds without a keeper stray'd,
The plough was in mid-furrow stay'd,
The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,

The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

XV

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green;
There mayst thou rest, thy labor done,
Their Lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way.
—What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—
Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

DUNCRAGGAN: A small village situated near the Brigg of Turk between Lochs Achray and Vennachar.



LOCH ACHRAY

XVI

Coronach

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!

CORONACH: A funeral dirge sung by members of the clan over the body of a deceased friend.

CORREI: The hollow side of a hill, where game usually lies.

CUMBER: Trouble, perplexity.

Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain
Thou art gone, and forever!

XVII

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall;
Before the dead man's bier he stood;
Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood;
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

XVIII

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;

STUMAH: Faithful; here it means the name of a dog.

But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her open'd arms he flew,
Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
“Alas!” she sobb'd,—“and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!”
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his laboring breast,
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she mark'd the henchman's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
“Kinsman,” she said, “his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fall'n—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead.”
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,

While from the walls the attendant band
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrow'd force;
Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

XIX

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear that gather'd in his eye
He left the mountain-breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,
He dash'd amid the torrent's roar:
His right hand high the crosslet bore,

STRATH-IRE: A valley to the east of Ben Ledi.

CHAPEL OF SAINT BRIDE: A chapel which stood on a knoll in the middle of Strath-Ire.

His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
 And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high,
 With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
 And had he fall'n,—for ever there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife,
 Until the opposing bank he gain'd,
 And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

XX

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
 Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
 To Norman, heir of Armandave,
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their march.
 In rude, but glad procession, came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
 And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
 Which snooded maiden would not hear:
 And children, that, unwitting why,
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
 And minstrels, that in measures vied
 Before the young and bonny bride,
 Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
 The tear and blush of morning rose.

TOMBEA and ARMANDAVE: Names of places near Strath-Ire.

COIF: A head-covering worn by married women.

With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band;
The gallant bridegroom by her side
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI

Who meets them at the churchyard gate?
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word:
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
And must he change so soon the hand,
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blithe that rose
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brook no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
—What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?
The sickening pang of hope deferr'd,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame;
The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honors on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

LUBNAIG'S LAKE: A lake about four miles long and one mile wide east of Ben Ledi.

XXIII

Song

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
 It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
 And all it promised me, Mary!
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
 His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
 Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if return'd from conquer'd foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
 To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
 Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
 Rushing, in conflagration strong,
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,
 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
 And reddening the dark lakes below;
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
 The signal roused to martial coil
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
 Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
 Thence southward turn'd its rapid road
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
 Till rose in arms each man might claim
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the gray sire, whose trembling hand
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
 Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
 Muster'd its little horde of men,

BALQUIDDER (bal-quad'er): A village on Loch Voil, the burial-place of Rob Roy.

MIDNIGHT BLAZE: It was customary for shepherds to burn the dry heather to make room for fresh herbage.

BALVAIG: A stream flowing from Lochs Voil and Doine.

STRATH-GARTNEY: A valley on the north side of Loch Katrine.

That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dale their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,
Each train'd to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Monteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con;
All seem'd at peace.—Now wot ye why
The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scann'd with care?—

REDNOCK, CARDROSS, DUCHRAY: Castles on the route.

LOCH CON: A lake between Benvenue and Ben Lomond.

In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequester'd dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin Cave.

XXVI

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had staid full many a rock,
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
From Benvenue's gray summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
And form'd the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;

But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern gray.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wildeat leaves her young;
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Gray Superstition's whisper dread
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread the mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo;
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.

Yet lags the chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighboring height,
By the low-levell'd sunbeam's light;
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain strand.

XXVIII

Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turn'd apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,

Has yet a harder task to prove—
 By firm resolve to conquer love!
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
 Still hovering near his treasure lost;
 For though his haughty heart deny
 A parting meeting to his eye,
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
 The accents of her voice to hear,
 And inly did he curse the breeze
 That waked to sound the rustling trees.
 But hark! what mingles in the strain?
 It is the harp of Allan-bane,
 That wakes its measure slow and high,
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
 What melting voice attends the strings?

XXIX

Hymn to the Virgin

Ave Maria! maiden mild!

Listen to a maiden's prayer!

Thou canst hear though from the wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.

Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,

Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—

Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

AVE MARIA (ah'vā mah-rē'a): The first two words of a Latin prayer to the Virgin, meaning Hail Mary.

Ave Maria! undefiled!

The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! Stainless styled!

Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!

Ave Maria!

XXX

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.

Then while his plaid he round him cast,
"It is the last time—'tis the last,"
He mutter'd thrice,—"the last time e'er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!"
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
An instant 'cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where muster'd in the vale below
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI

A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray'd;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couch'd to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was match'd the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,

Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times return'd the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claim'd her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

The Prophecy

I

“THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!”
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.

WILDING: Wild.

CONCEIT: Fanciful idea.

“Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
 Art thou return’d from Braes of Doune.
 By thy keen step and glance I know
 Thou bring’st us tidings of the foe.”—
 (For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
 On distant scout had Malise gone.)

“Where sleeps the Chief?” the henchman said.

“Apart, in yonder misty glade;
 To his lone couch I’ll be your guide.”—
 Then call’d a slumberer by his side,
 And stirr’d him with his slacken’d bow—

“Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
 We seek the Chieftain; on the track,
 Keep eagle watch till I come back.”

III

Together up the pass they sped:

“What of the foeman?” Norman said.—

“Varying reports from near and far;
 This certain,—that a band of war
 Has for two days been ready boune,
 At prompt command, to march from Doune;
 King James, the while, with princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.

BRAES OF DOUNE: Sloping hill on north side of Teith near Doune Castle.

BOUNE: Made ready.

Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
 "What! know ye not that Roderick's care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the clan,
 And every child and agèd man
 Unfit for arms? and given his charge,
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest secure?"—

IV

"'Tis well advised—the Chieftain's plan
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
 Apart from all his followers true?"—
 "It is, because last evening-tide
 Brian an augury hath tried,
 Of that dread kind which must not be
 Unless in dread extremity,

INURED: Hardened.

BOUT: Contest.

REPAIR: Hath caused each maid to repair to the lone isle..

The Taghairm call'd; by which, afar,
 Our sires foresaw the events of war.
 Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew.
 The choicest of the prey we had,
 When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
 His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
 His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;
 So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,
 And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
 Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.

TAGHAIRM: "The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm* mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt the desolate recesses" (SCOTT).

GALLANGAD: The scene of a raid.

CUMBER: Encumber.

KERNES: Robbers.

BEAL 'MAHA (beal-ma-ha'): "The pass of the plain" near Loch Lomond.

But steep and flinty was the road,
 And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
 And when we came to Dennan's Row,
 A child might scatheless stroke his brow."—

V

NORMAN

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
 They stretch'd the cataract beside,
 Whose waters their wild tumult toss
 Adown the black and craggy boss
 Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
 Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
 Couch'd on a shelf beneath its brink,
 Close where the thundering torrents sink,
 Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
 And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
 Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
 The wizard waits prophetic dream.
 Nor distant rests the Chief;—but hush!
 See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
 The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
 To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
 Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
 That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?"

DENNAN'S ROW: The starting-place for ascending Ben Lomond.

BOSS: Knob, protuberance.

HERO'S TARGE: A rock in the forest of Glenfinlas.

Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE

—"Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, glean'd from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."

VI

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word:
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endow'd with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,

BROKE: Quartered, cut up. "Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking*, the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also" (SCOTT).

'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
 The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, my eyeballs dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish torn,
 This for my Chieftain have I borne!—
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 An human tongue may ne'er avouch;
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.
 At length the fateful answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
 But borne and branded on my soul;—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE.”—

VII

“Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.

AVOUCH: To affirm openly.

WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE, THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE: “Though this be in the text described as the response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated, in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood” (SCOTT).

Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow:
 A spy has sought my land this morn,—
 No eye shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring him down.
 —But see, who comes his news to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?"

VIII

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.
 I saw the Moray's silver star,
 And mark'd the sable pale of Mar."—
 "By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
 Will see them here for battle boune."—

DOUNE: Castle of the Monteith's, above Stirling.

GLAIVE: A sword.

SILVER STAR: Heraldic term; the coat of arms of the Morays bore in its upper part three silver stars.

SABLE PALE: Heraldic term; a black perpendicular stripe in the middle of the shield.

“Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Naught of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened by them, we well might bide
The battle on Benledi’s side.
Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine’s men
Shall man the Trosachs’ shaggy glen;
Within Loch Katrine’s gorge we’ll fight,
All in our maids’ and matrons’ sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,—
Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omen’d tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
’Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their charge.”
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the Chieftain’s glance.—
I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

EARN: The clan that lived in the district about Loch Earn.

STANCE: Station or foundation.

IX

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
 And Ellen sits on the gray stone
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 Are poured on her unheeding ear.—
 "He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
 With joy return;—he will—he must.
 Well was it time to seek, afar,
 Some refuge from impending war,
 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
 Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
 I saw their boats, with many a light,
 Floating the livelong yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 By the red streamers of the north;
 I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
 Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side,
 Like wild ducks couching in the fen,
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the mainland side,
 Shall not thy noble father's care
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

RED STREAMERS OF THE NORTH: Aurora Borealis, or northern lights.

FEN: Marsh.

SINCE THIS RUDE RACE, etc.: Refers to the gathering of women and children on the island; see Canto III.

X

ELLEN .

“No, Allan, no. Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,
The tear that glisten'd in his eye
Drown'd not his purpose fix'd on high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his; e'en as the lake,
Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden, when the theme
Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream
Of Malcolm Græme, in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
Oh no! 'twas apprehensive thought
For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
(Let me be just) that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven'?

TROW'D: Believed.

Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
 If eve return him not again,
 Am I to hie, and make me known?
 Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
 Buys his friend's safety with his own;—
 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son!”

XI

“Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane
 As fitting place to meet again.
 Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
 My vision'd sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,
 And think upon the harpings slow,
 That presaged this approaching woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.
 Would we had left this dismal spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.

CAMBUS-KENNETH'S FANE (cam-bus-ken'eth): An abbey on the Forth near Stirling.

BEGUILE: Deceive.

PRESAGED: Foreshadowed.



ABBOTSFORD—HOME OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

Of such a wondrous tale I know—
 Dear lady, change that look of woe,
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.”—

ELLEN

“Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
 But cannot stop the bursting tear.”
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,
 But distant far was Ellen’s heart.

XII

Ballad

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
 When the mavis and merle are singing,
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
 And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

“O Alice Brand, my native land
 Is lost for love of you;
 And we must hold by wood and wold,
 As outlaws wont to do.

“O Alice, ’twas all for thy locks so bright,
 And ’twas all for thine eyes so blue,
 That on the night of our luckless flight,
 Thy brother bold I slew.

MAVIS: Thrush.

MERLE: Blackbird.

WOLD: A country without wood.

“Now must I teach to hew the beech,
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

“And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughter'd deer,
To keep the cold away.”

“O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

“If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
As gay the forest-green.

“And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.”

PALL: An outer garment of rich material worn by the nobility.

VAIR: A fur of variegated color worn by ladies of rank.

XIII

Ballad Continued

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
 So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
 On the beech's pride, and the oak's brown side,
 Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
 Who won'd within the hill,—
 Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd church,
 His voice was ghostly shrill.

“Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
 Our moonlight circle's screen?
 Or who comes here to chase the deer,
 Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
 Or who may dare on wold to wear
 The fairies' fatal green?”

“Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
 For thou wert christen'd man;
 For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
 For mutter'd word or ban.

WON'D: Lived (obsolete).

FAIRIES' FATAL GREEN: In many parts of Scotland green is held to be unlucky, for the reason that elves or gnomes assumed this color and became enraged should a mortal presume to wear it.

URGAN: A knight slain by Sir Tristram.

CHRISTEN'D MAN: According to Scott a baptized Christian possessed many privileges; the elves granted him certain rights and privileges because of this distinction.

“Lay on him the curse of the wither'd heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Not yet find leave to die.”

XIV

Ballad Continued

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have still'd their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
“I fear not sign,” quoth the grisly elf,
“That is made with bloody hands.”

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
“And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer.”—

“Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand.”—

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
“And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

“And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?”

XV

Ballad Continued

“'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

“And gayly shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

“And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

“It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, ’twixt life and death, was snatch’d away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

“But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine.”—

She cross’d him once—she cross’d him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross’d him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing.

DUNFERMLINE: A town seventeen miles northwest from Edinburgh, and was for a long time the residence of Scottish kings.

XVI

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
 A stranger climb'd the steepy glade;
 His martial step, his stately mien,
 His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
 'Tis Snowdoun's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
 Ellen beheld as in a dream,
 Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream:
 "O stranger! in such hour of fear,
 What evil hap has brought thee here?"
 "An evil hap how can it be,
 That bids me look again on thee?
 By promise bound, my former guide
 Met me betimes this morning tide,
 And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
 The happy path of my return."—
 "The happy path!—what! said he nought
 Of war, of battle to be fought,
 Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
 Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
 "O haste thee, Allan, to the kern:
 Yonder his tartans I discern;
 Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
 That he will guide the stranger sure!—

HAP: Chance or circumstance.

BOURNE: Boundary.

SCATHE: Foretell injury.

KERN: A serf or slave.

What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him, to guide thee here."—

XVII

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honor's weigh'd with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower"—
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on!—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!

Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlaw'd and exil'd, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.
Still would'st thou speak?—then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart!”

XVIII

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.

He proffer'd to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—
“O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou may'st trust yon wily kern.”
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,
He paus'd, and turn'd, and came again.

XIX

“Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship, the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?”

HELM: Helmet.

EMBATTLED FIELD: Battlefield.

RECK: Held.

Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the king without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me.”—
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone.
The agèd Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He join'd his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

. XX

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high—
“Murdoch! was that a signal cry?”—
He stammer'd forth,—“I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—“Ah! gallant gray!
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.—

SIGNET: A ring containing a private seal; this commanded the same attention as a passport from the king.

Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!”—
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shriek'd till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,
For then the Lowland garb she knew;

ON THEY FARED: Journeyed.

WEEDS: Garments of mourning.

GAUDY BROOM: A plant bearing bright yellow flowers.

And then her hands she wildly wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she sung.—
 She sung!—the voice, in better time,
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
 And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still
 Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII

Song

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
 They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
 But were I now where Allan glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest, and pray
 That Heaven would close my wintry day!

'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
 They made me to the church repair;
 It was by bridal morn they said,
 And my true love would meet me there.
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drown'd in blood the morning smile!
 And woe betide the fairy dream!
 I only waked to sob and scream.—

XXIII

"Who is this maid? what means her lay?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle gray,
 As the lone heron spreads his wing,
 By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."—
 "'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
 "A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
 Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
 When Roderick foray'd Devan-side.
 The gay bridegroom resistance made,
 And felt our Chief's unconquer'd blade.
 I marvel she is now at large,
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
 Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
 "Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
 As ever peasant pitch'd a bar!"—
 "Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried,
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's side.
 "See the gray pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true-love through the air!
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume!
 No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall fatten on his bones,

MAUDLIN'S CHARGE: A corruption of Magdalen.

PITCH'D A BAR: Tossed a heavy hammer.

PENNSONS: Wings or feathers.

And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid air staid,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free,
 Meet signal for their revelry.”—

XXIV

“Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!”—
 “O! thou look’st kindly, and I will.—
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green;
 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.
 “For O my sweet William was forester true,
 He stole poor Blanche’s heart away!
 His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
 And so blithely he trill’d the Lowland lay!
 “It was not that I meant to tell . . .
 But thou art wise, and guessest well.”
 Then, in a low and broken tone,
 And hurried note, the song went on.
 Still on the clansman, fearfully,
 She fix’d her apprehensive eye;
 Then turn’d it on the Knight, and then
 Her look glanced wildly o’er the glen.

O MY SWEET WILLIAM: The sight of the stranger in lowland garb reminds the insane woman of her husband.

GREENWOOD HUE: The lowland garb of Lincoln green.

XXV

“The toils are pitch’d, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

“It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warn’d him of the toils below,
O so faithfully, faithfully!

“He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly.”—

XXVI

Fitz-James’s mind was passion-toss’d,
When Ellen’s hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch’s shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche’s song conviction brought.
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,

STAG OF TEN: Having ten branches on his antlers, therefore full grown.

He waved at once his blade on high,
“Disclose thy treachery, or die!”—
Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James’s crest,
And thrill’d in Blanche’s faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne’er had Alpine’s son such need;
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life;
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couch’d upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambush’d kin thou ne’er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!—
Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o’er the fall’n, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;

She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laugh'd;
Her wreath of broom and feathers gray
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried,—
“Stranger, it is in vain!” she cried.
“This hour of death has given me more
Of reason’s power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye,
That thou wert mine avenger born.—
Seest thou this tress?—O! still I’ve worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimm’d its shine.
I will not tell thee when ’twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim’s head—
My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still.—O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light!—
O! by thy knighthood’s honored sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine’s Clan,

With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!—
 They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell.”—

XXVIII

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
 Fast pour'd his eyes at pity's claims,
 And now, with mingled grief and ire,
 He saw the murder'd maid expire.
 “God, in my need, be my relief,
 As I wreak this on yonder Chief!”
 A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
 He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
 The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
 And placed it on his bonnet-side:
 “By Him whose word is truth, I swear,
 No other favor will I wear,
 Till this sad token I imbrue
 In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!—
 But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
 The chase is up,—but they shall know,
 The stag at bay 's a dangerous foe.”
 Barr'd from the known but guarded way,
 Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,

And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turn'd back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:—
“Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
That all this Highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms as soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—
Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—
If further through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe:
I'll couch me here till evening gray,
Then darkling try my dangerous way.”

XXIX

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapp'd in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step, and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;

And not the summer solstice, there,
 Temper'd the midnight mountain air,
 But every breeze that swept the wold
 Benumb'd his drenchèd limbs with cold.
 In dread, in danger, and alone,
 Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
 Tangled and steep, he journey'd on;
 Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
 A watch-fire close before him burn'd.

XXX

Beside its embers red and clear,
 Bask'd, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
 And up he sprang with sword in hand,—
 "Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"
 "A stranger."—"What dost thou require?"—
 "Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
 My life's beset, my path is lost,
 The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost."
 "Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
 "Thou darest not call thyself a foe?"—
 "I dare! to him and all the band
 He brings to aid his murderous hand."
 "Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
 The privilege of chase may claim,
 Though space and law the stag we lend,
 Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
 Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
 The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?"

Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou cam'st a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."
"Then by these tokens may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
"Enough, enough; sit down, and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."

XXXI

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech address'd:—
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honor spoke,
Demands of me avenging stroke;
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:

But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
 Will I depart from honor's laws;
 To assail a wearied man were shame,
 And stranger is a holy name;
 Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
 In vain he never must require.
 Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
 Myself will guide thee on the way,
 O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
 Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
 As far as Coilantogle's ford;
 From thence thy warrant is thy sword."—
 "I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
 As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
 "Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
 Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."—
 With that he shook the gather'd heath,
 And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
 And the brave foemen, side by side,
 Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
 And slept until the dawning beam
 Purpled the mountain and the stream.

COILANTOGLE'S FORD (coil-än-tō'gle): A ford on the Teith near
 the eastern end of Loch Vennachar.

CANTO FIFTH

The Combat

I

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow
of War.

II

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
Mutter'd their soldiers matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.

DAPPLED: Flecked with spots.

That o'er, the Gael around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain gray.
A wildering path!—they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear.

III

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post,
With hardihood, against a host.

The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrents down had borne,
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And ask'd Fitz-James by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
"I dream'd not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,

SHINGLES: Pebbles, gravel.

OSIERS: Damp willows.

All seem'd as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."
"Yet why a second venture try?"—
"A warrior thou, and ask me why!—
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,
The merry glance of mountain maid:
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone."—

V

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye naught of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine rais'd by Mar?"—
"No, by my words;—of bands prepared
To guard King James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung."—

“Free be they flung! for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine’s pine in banner brave.
But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewilder’d in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine’s vow’d and mortal foe?”—
“Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
Naught of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlaw’d desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent’s court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabb’d a knight:
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart.”—

VI

Wrathful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lower’d the clansman’s sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
“And heard’st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard’st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick’s vengeance on his foe?
What reck’d the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven.”—
“Still was it outrage;—yet, ’tis true,
Not then claim’d sovereignty his due;

While Albany, with feeble hand,
 Held borrow'd truncheon of command,
 The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,
 Was stranger to respect and power.
 But then, thy Chieftain's robber life!—
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
 Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland swain
 His herds and harvest rear'd in vain,—
 Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
 The spoils from such foul foray borne.”—

VII

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
 And answer'd with disdainful smile,—
 “Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
 I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
 Far to the south and east, where lay,
 Extended in succession gay,

WHILE ALBANY, WITH FEEBLE HAND, HELD BORROW'D TRUNCHEON OF COMMAND: The Duke of Albany was Regent while James V was in his minority. Albany was a cousin of the King. “There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed” (SCOTT).

TRUNCHEON: Staff.

MEW'D: Confined.

Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between:—
These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread
For fatten'd steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
But one along yon river's maze,—
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
That plundering Lowland field and fold

SHINGLES: Coarse gravel embedded in hillside.

Is aught but retribution true?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."

VIII

Answer'd Fitz-James,—“And, if I sought,
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?"

“As of a meed to rashness due:
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;
 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—

“Well, let it pass; nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride:
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
 In peace; but when I come again,
 I come with banner, brand, and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.

SEEK OTHER CAUSE: Scott says that the Gael never forgot that the Lowlands at some remote period had belonged to his ancestors, and so were fair prey.

For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his band!"—

IX

"Have, then, thy wish!"—He whistled shrill,
And he was answer'd from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles gray their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
That whistle garrison'd the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still.

CURLEW: A wading bird.

BRACKEN: Fern.

BECK: Nod.

Like the loose crags, whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"

X

Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:—
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."
Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;

Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
 In osiers pale and copses low;
 It seem'd as if their mother Earth
 Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
 The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,
 Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
 The next but swept a lone hill-side,
 Where heath and fern were-waving wide:
 The sun's last glance was glinted back,
 From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
 The next, all unreflected, shone
 On bracken green and cold gray stone.

XI

Fitz-James look'd round,—yet scarce believed
 The witness that his sight received;
 Such apparition well might seem
 Delusion of a dreadful dream.
 Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
 And to his look the Chief replied,
 “Fear naught—nay, that I need not say—
 But—doubt not aught from mine array.
 Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
 As far as Coilantogle ford:

OSIERS: Willows.

GLINTED: Flashed.

TARGE: Shield.

JACK: A leather jacket; a coat of defence plated with pieces of steel or leather.

Nor would I call a clansman's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on;—I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”—
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say, that now his blood
Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that to take his life
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonor'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanish'd guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reach'd that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the Chieftain staid,
Threw down his targer and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said:—
“Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here, all vantageless, I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand:

THREE MIGHTY LAKES: Katrine, Achray, and Vennachar.

BOCHASTLE: “The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and, indeed, on the plain itself, are some entrenchments which have been thought Roman” (SCOTT).

EAGLE: Refers to the standard of the Roman army.

For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII

The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delay'd,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:—
Can naught but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—"No, Stranger, none!
And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead:
'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.'"
"Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
"The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy,
Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favor free,
I plight mine honor, oath, and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,

With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land.”—

XIV

Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye:
“Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
My clansman's blood demands revenge.—
Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valor light
As that of some vain carpet-knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair.”—
“I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle classmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.

CARPET-KNIGHT: More of a drawing-room favorite than a fighter.

But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.”—
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then foot and point and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dash'd aside;
For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.

TRAIN'D ABROAD: “Fitz-James had received his training in France, where he learned to use the rapier, instead of the much heavier and more unwieldy broadsword used by the Highlanders. Fitz-James was as skilful in parrying the blows of his antagonist as he was in his attack, and although Roderick was the stronger, the difference in weapons placed him at a disadvantage.”

Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And, backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI

“Now, yield thee, or, by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!”—
“Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die.”
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Receiv'd, but reck'd not of a wound,
And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!
They tug, they strain! down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
His knee was planted on his breast;

His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII

He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeem'd, unhop'd, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appear'd his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipp'd the braid,—
“Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that Faith and Valor give.”
With that he blew a bugle note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sate down his brow and hands to lave.

Then faint afar he heard the feet
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
 The sounds increase, and now are seen
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
 Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
 By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
 Each onward held his headlong course,
 And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
 With wonder view'd the bloody spot—
 “Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
 You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
 And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
 Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,
 We destined for a fairer freight,
 And bring him on to Stirling straight;
 I will before at better speed,
 To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
 The sun rides high;—I must be boune,
 To see the archer-game at noon;
 But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
 De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII

“Stand, Bayard, stand!”—the steed obey'd
 With arching neck and bended head,
 And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
 As if he loved his lord to hear.
 No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
 No grasp upon the saddle laid,

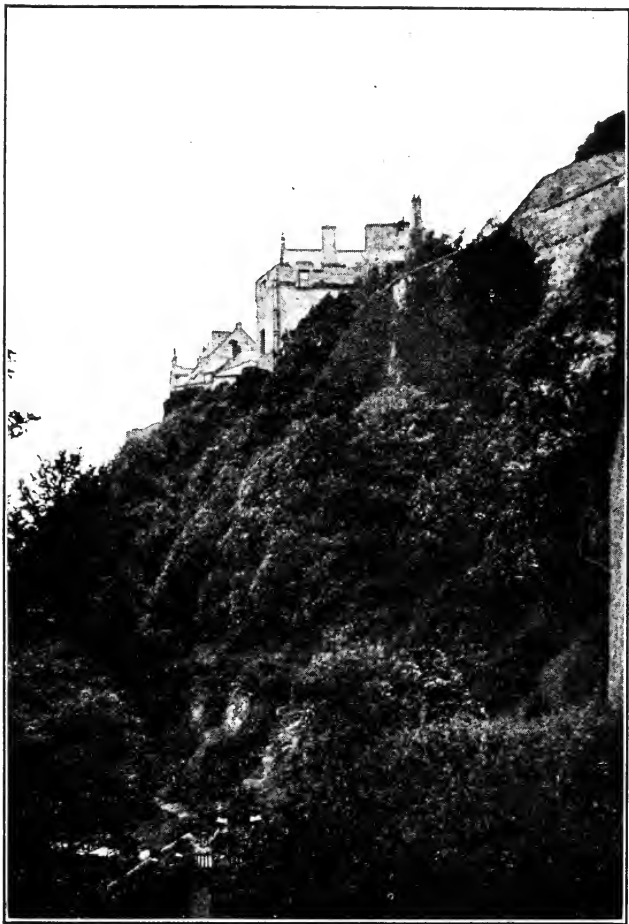
PALFREY: A small saddle horse for a lady's use.

But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,
 And lightly bounded from the plain,
 Turn'd on the horse his armed heel,
 And stirr'd his courage with the steel.
 Bounded the fiery steed in air,
 The rider sate erect and fair,
 Then, like a bolt from steel cross-bow
 Forth launch'd, along the plain they go.
 They dash'd that rapid torrent through,
 And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
 Still at the gallop prick'd the Knight,
 His merry-men follow'd as they might,
 Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
 And in the race they mock thy tide;
 Torry and Lendrick now are past,
 And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
 They rise, the banner'd towers of Doune,
 They sink in distant woodland soon;
 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire
 They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
 They mark just glance and disappear
 The lofty brow of ancient Kier;

CARHONIE'S HILL: Situated about a mile from the lower end of Loch Vennachar.

TORRY, LENDRICK, DEANSTOWN, BLAIR-DRUMMOND, OCHTERTYRE, and KIER: Places situated on the Teith between Callandar and Stirling.

DOUNE: "The ruins of Doune Castle, formerly the residence of the Earls of Monteith, now the property of the Earl of Moray, are situated at the confluence of the Ardoch and the Teith" (SCOTT).



STIRLING CASTLE

They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
 Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
 And on the opposing shore take ground,
 With splash, with scramble, and with bound.
 Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
 And soon the bulwark of the North,
 Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,
 Upon their fleet career look'd down.

XIX

As up the flinty path they strain'd,
 Sudden his steed the leader rein'd;
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
 “Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor array?
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain side?
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?”
 “No, by my word;—a burly groom
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A baron's train would nobly grace.”—
 “Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye?
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew;

STIRLING: Stirling Castle, the residence of James V, was one of the principal fortresses of Scotland.

Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'Tis James of Douglas, by St. Serle!
The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his guard;
Douglas and he must meet prepared."
Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey gray,
Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late!
The abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of heaven;—
—Be pardon'd one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,

POSTERN GATE: Back gate.

BRIDE OF HEAVEN: One who devotes her life to the services of the church.

How excellent!—but that is by,
 And now my business is—to die.
 —Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
 And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
 That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
 As on the noblest of the land
 Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
 The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
 Prepare,—for Douglas seeks his doom!
 But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
 Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
 And see! upon the crowded street,
 In motley groups what masquers meet!
 Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
 And merry morrice-dancers come.
 I guess, by all this quaint array,
 The burghers hold their sports to-day.
 James will be there; he loves such show,
 Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
 And the tough wrestler foils his foe,

A DOUGLAS: James II stabbed William, eighth Earl of Douglas, at Stirling Castle.

O SAD AND FATAL MOUND: "An eminence on the northeast of the castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood" (SCOTT).

MORRICE-DANCERS: A dance of Moorish origin and a popular form of amusement. For a description of the game, etc., see Scott's *Abbot*, ch. xiv, and *The Fair Maid of Perth*, ch. xvi.

As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park,
And play my prize;—King James shall mark,
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise.”

XXI

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering draw-bridge rock'd and rung,
And echo'd loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddlebow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,

JENNET: A small Spanish horse.

Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
 "Long live the Commons' King, King James!"
 Behind the King throng'd peer and knight,
 And noble dame and damsel bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay
 Of the steep street and crowded way.
 —But in the train you might discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
 There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,
 And the mean burgher's joys disdain'd;
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
 Were each from home a banish'd man,
 There thought upon their own gray tower,
 Their waving woods, their feudal power,
 And deem'd themselves a shameful part
 Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
 Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout.

COMMONS' KING: James V, who favored the common people in preference to the nobles.

HOSTAGE FOR THEIR CLAN: "James compelled some of the most powerful Highland chiefs to reside at the castle as a guaranty of good behavior of their clans. An uprising by one of these clans would cause their chief to be put to death at once; therefore, so long as the chieftains were in the king's power, there was little danger from their clans. This forced service was very aggravating to the chieftains, but they were powerless to change their condition."

There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
His first shaft center'd in the white,

BOLD ROBIN HOOD: "The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favorite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592. Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England, for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime" (SCOTT).

FRIAR TUCK, SCATHELOCKE, MAID MARIAN, SCARLET, MUTCH, and LITTLE JOHN: Members of Robin Hood's band of outlaws mentioned in *Ivanhoe*.

THE DOUGLAS BENT A BOW: Scott says, "The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of Angus. But the king's behavior during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglases, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from the real story told by Hume of Goldscroft."

And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor call'd in vain; for Douglas came.—
For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bare.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd;
Indignant then he turn'd him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone

From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The gray-hair'd sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.
The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd
A purse well fill'd with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark gray man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free and hand so strong
Must to the Douglas blood belong;
The old men mark'd, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And wink'd aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,

LADIES' ROCK: A small rocky mount in the valley, on the castle hill, where the fair ones of the court took their station to behold these feats.

Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women prais'd his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;
The youth, with awe and wonder, saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamors loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honor'd place,
Begirt his board, and in the field
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he, whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known!

XXV

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favorite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra, whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.

She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And, dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and, with leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck,
In maiden glee, with garlands deck;
They were such playmates that, with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darken'd brow and flashing eye;—
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI

Then clamor'd loud the royal train,
And brandish'd swords and staves amain,

But stern the Baron's warning—"Back!
 Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
 Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
 King James! The Douglas, doom'd of old,
 And vainly sought for near and far,
 A victim to atone the war,
 A willing victim, now attends,
 Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
 "Thus is my clemency repaid?
 Presumptuous Lord!" the Monarch said;
 "Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
 Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
 The only man, in whom a foe
 My woman-mercy would not know;
 But shall a Monarch's presence brook
 Injurious blow and haughty look?—
 What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
 Give the offender fitting ward.—
 Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
 And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
 "Break off the sports!" he said, and frown'd,
 "And bid our horsemen clear the ground."—

XXVII

Then uproar wild and misarray
 Marr'd the fair form of festal day

MIS-PROUD: Wrongfully proud.

WOMAN-MERCY: Effeminate clemency.

WARD: Imprisonment.

The horsemen prick'd among the crowd;
Repell'd by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway steep;
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disorder'd roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The Commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said,—
“Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas my blade,
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed, permit me then
A word with these misguided men.—

XXVIII

“Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honor, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire?
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,

My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those cords of love I should unbind
Which knit my country and my kind?
O no! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red;
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
For me that mother wails her son;
For me that widow's mate expires;
For me that orphans weep their sires;
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"—

XXIX

The crowd's wild fury sunk amain
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they pray'd
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men upon the verge of life
Bless'd him who stay'd the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrong and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:

Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resign'd his honor'd charge.

XXX

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
Strain'd for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hail'd the day,
When first I broke the Douglas' sway;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;

AND AT THE CASTLE'S BATTLED VERGE: The wall around the top of the castle, with openings, through which the garrison could annoy an attacking party.

Fantastic as a woman's mood,
 And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,
 O who would wish to be thy king!—

XXXI

“But soft! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
 I guess his cognizance afar—
 What from our cousin, John of Mar?”—
 “He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground:
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw'd Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summon'd his rebellious crew;
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand array'd.
 The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march'd, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought;
 But earnestly the Earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride.”

XXXII

“Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,
 I should have earlier look'd to this:

I lost it in this bustling day.—
Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
We do forbid the intended war;
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar my message, Braco, fly!"—
He turn'd his steed,—“My liege. I hie,—
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broadswords will be drawn.”
The turf the flying courser spurn'd,
And to his towers the King return'd.

XXXIII

Ill with King James's mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the sadden'd town
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumor'd feuds and mountain war,

Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms:—the Douglas too,
They mourn'd him pent within the hold,
“Where stout Earl William was of old.”
And there his word the speaker staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the castle press'd;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumor shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

The Guard-Room

I

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!
The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospitals beholds it stream;
The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

CAITIFF: A wretched man.

OF SINFUL MAN: See Gen. iii, 19.

GYVE (jiv): A shackle; especially one to confine the legs.

II

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air,
Deaden'd the torches' yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deform'd with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fever'd with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,
Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
Some labor'd still their thirst to quench:
Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

CASEMENT: A window.

DEBAUCH: Intemperance.

BEAKER: A large drinking cup, with a wide mouth, supported on a foot.

HARNESS: Armor.

III

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the laborer's toil;
Their rolls show'd French and German name;
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-conceal'd disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;

ADVENTURERS: "The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. James V seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the Foot-Band" (SCOTT).

SWITZER: An inhabitant of Switzerland.

FLEMING: A citizen of Flanders.

HALBERD: A long-handled weapon. A combination of spear and battle-ax.

In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs and bodies gored
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighboring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up-started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,

BLOODY FRAY: The battle between the followers of Roderick Dhu and the King's forces under the Earl of Mar.

And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."—

V

Soldier's Song

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

CATCH: A part song.

TROLL: Gayly.

BUXOM: Lively.

VICAR: A subordinate clergyman.

BEELZEBUB: The sovereignty of the evil spirits.

APOLLYON: The destroying angel.

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI

The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
 A soldier to the portal went,—
 “Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
 And, beat for jubilee the drum!—
 A maid and minstrel with him come.”—
 Bertram, a Fleming, gay and scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,
 A harper with him, and in plaid
 All muffled close, a mountain maid,
 Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
 “What news?” they roar'd:—“I only know,
 From noon till eve we fought with foe,
 As wild and as untamable
 As the rude mountains where they dwell.

CURE: The parish of a priest or curate.

PLACKET: A woman's pocket.

POT: A mug of ale.

LURCH: To lie in wait.

FLEMING: A native of Flanders, a country now occupying what is known as Belgium, Netherlands, and France.

On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."—
"But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band."—

VII

"No, comrade;—no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."—
"Hear ye his boast!" cried John of Brent,
Ever to strife and jangling bent;
"Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?
I'll have my share howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."—
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;

But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
And dropp'd at once the tartan screen.
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May, through summer tears.
The savage soldiery, amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;
Even hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII

Boldly she spoke,—“Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend;
Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the strong,
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong.”—
Answer'd De Brent, most forward still
In every feat or good or ill,—
“I shame me of the part I play'd:
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,”—
He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
“Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall:

There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."—

IX

Their captain-came, a gallant young,—
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humor light,
And, though by courtesy controll'd,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
"Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?"

TULLIBARDINE: The name of an old seat of the Murray family in Perthshire.

DAMOSEL: A wandering damsel.

Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
Her dark eye flash'd;—she paused and sigh'd—
"O what have I to do with pride!—
—Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

X

The signet-ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and alter'd look;
And said,—“This ring our duties own;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way.”
But, ere she follow'd, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.

The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold;—
“Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar.”—
With thanks,—'twas all she could,—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:—
“My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the Chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must soothe the infant heir,

GUERDON: Reward.

BARRET-CAP: A flat cap worn by priests.

Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our verse,
A doleful tribute!—o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right—deny it not!"—
"Little we reckon," said John of Brent,
"We Southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name—a word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer,
More than to guide the laboring steer,
I had not dwelt on outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."—

XII

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,

And many an hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
By artist form'd, who deem'd it shame
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-brow'd porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They enter'd:—'twas a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor;
Such as the rugged days of old
Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou may'st remain
Till the Leech visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering Minstrel look'd, and knew—
Not his dear Lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deem'd the Chief he sought.

GARNITURE: Furnishings, decorations.

LEECH: A physician or surgeon.

XIII

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
 Shall never stem the billows more,
 Deserted by her gallant band,
 Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
 And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat;—
 O! how unlike her course at sea!
 Or his free step on hill and lea!—
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
 —“What of thy lady?—of my clan?—
 My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
 Have they been ruin'd in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
 Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear.”—
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,
 Was choked with grief and terror too.)
 “Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;—
 Some might—for they had lost their Chief.
 Who basely live?—who bravely died?”
 “O, calm thee, Chief!” the Minstrel cried,
 “Ellen is safe;”—“For that, thank Heaven!”—
 “And hopes are for the Douglas given;—

The Lady Margaret too is well;
And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent.”

XIV

The Chieftain rear'd his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
—“Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,
With measure bold, on festal day,
In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst,)
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soar'd from battle fray.”
The trembling Bard with awe obey'd,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;

But soon remembrance of the sight
 He witness'd from the mountain height,
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awaken'd the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along;—
 As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV

Battle of Beal' an Duine

“The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
 For ere he parted, he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!—
 There is no breeze upon the fern,
 Nor ripple on the lake,
 Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
 The deer has sought the brake;

BATTLE OF BEAL': "A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V." (SCOTT).

ERNE: Eagle.

The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
The sun's retiring beams?—
I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star,
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!
To hero bound for battle-strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
One glance at their array!

XVI

“Their light-arm'd archers far and near
Survey'd the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frown'd,
Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
The stern battalia crown'd.

No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armor's clang,
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
That shadow'd o'er their road.
Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirr'd the roe;
The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High-swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws:
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII

“At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that fell
Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell!

VAWARD: The vanguard of an army.

Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their plight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood?—
'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!—
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levell'd low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'—

TINCHEL: "A circle of sportsmen, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*" (SCOTT).

XVIII

“Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean’s mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest’s wing,
They hurl’d them on the foe.
I heard the lance’s shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
I heard the broadsword’s deadly clang,
As if an hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheel’d his rearward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine’s flank,—
‘My banner-man, advance!
I see,’ he cried, ‘their column shake.
Now, gallants! for your ladies’ sake,
Upon them with the lance!’—
The horsemen dash’d among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine’s best are backward borne—
Where, where was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.

And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was pour'd;
Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanish'd the mountain-sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass:
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX

“Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within.—
Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
Gray Benvenue I soon repass'd,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge,

Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.

Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged agen,

But not in mingled tide;

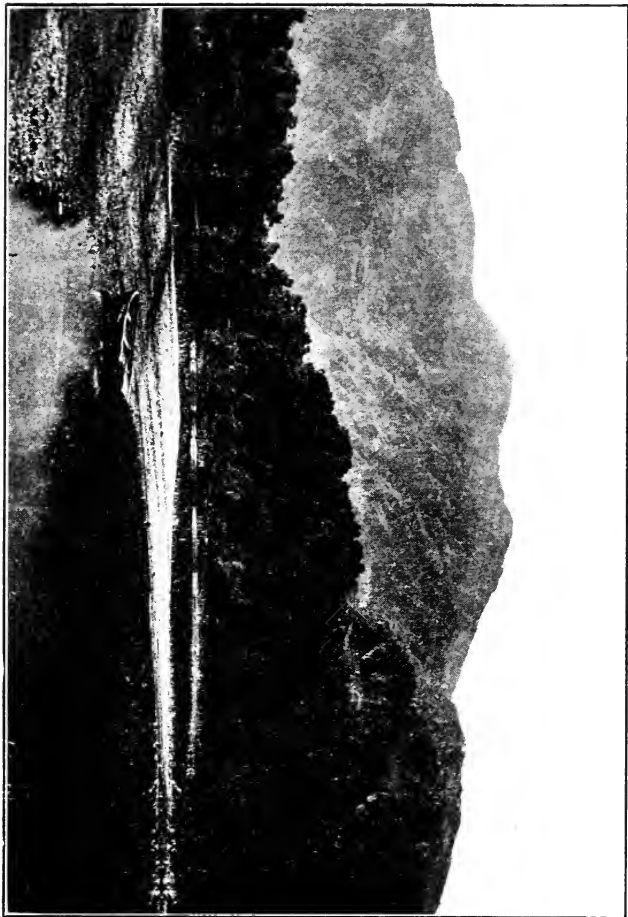
The plaided warriors of the North
High on the mountain thunder forth
And overhang its side;

While by the lake below appears
The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shatter'd band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

XX

Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxon stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'Tis there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile;—

LOCH KATRINE



My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
 To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
 And loose a shallop from the shore.
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
 Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'—
 Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
 On earth his casque and corslet rung,
 He plunged him in the wave:—
 All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
 And to their clamors Benvenue
 A mingled echo gave;
 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
 The helpless females scream for fear,
 And yells for rage the mountaineer.
 'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
 Pour'd down at once the lowering heaven;
 A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
 Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.
 Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
 For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,
 The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
 In vain—He nears the isle—and lo!
 His hand is on a shallop's bow.

BONNET-PIECES: "A gold coin on which the king's head was represented with a bonnet instead of a crown, coined by the 'Commons' King'" (TAYLOR).

CASQUE: A piece of defensive armor for head and neck.

CORSLET: A piece of armor for protecting the front of the body.

Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame,
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand:—
It darken'd,—but amid the moan
Of waves, I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI

“‘Revenge! revenge!’ the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold.”—
But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!

Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
 How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy:
 At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
 With lifted hand kept feeble time;
 That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
 Varied his look as changed the song;
 At length, no more his deafen'd ear
 The minstrel melody can hear;
 His face grows sharp,—his hands are clench'd,
 As if some pang his heart-strings wrench'd;
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye
 Is sternly fix'd on vacancy;
 Thus, motionless and moanless, drew
 His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!—
 Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit pass'd;
 But when he saw that life was fled,
 He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII

Lament

“And art thou cold, and lowly laid,
 Thy foemen's dread, thy people's aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
 For thee shall none a requiem say?—
 For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
 For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
 The shelter of her exiled line,
 E'en in this prison-house of thine.
 I'll wail for Alpine's honor'd Pine!

“What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.—
O woe for Alpine’s honor’d Pine!

“Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prison’d eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine’s honor’d Pine.”—

XXIII

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remain’d in lordly bower apart,
Where play’d, with many-color’d gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten’d up a tapestried wall,

STORIED PANE: Stained window glass on which are depicted historical scenes.

And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or if she look'd, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawn'd the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claim'd with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.—
Those who such simple joys have known,
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head,
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung

XXIV

Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman

“My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,

My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forests green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.
I hate to learn the ebb of time
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.
No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
That life is lost to love and me!"—

XXV

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The list'ner had not turn'd her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.

She turn'd the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lay his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half staid,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,

And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aërial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who own'd this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent,
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

SNOWDOUN'S KNIGHT, etc.: "James V was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered he used to traverse the vicinage of his several places in various disguises" (SCOTT).

XXVII

As wreath of snow on mountain-breast
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands,—
She show'd the ring,—she clasp'd her hands.
O, not a moment could he brook,
The generous Prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Check'd with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
And bade her terrors be dismiss'd:—
“Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask naught for Douglas;—yester even,
His Prince and he have much forgiven:
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
Yield what they craved with clamor loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided, and our laws.
I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern,
With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn;
And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our Throne.—

But, lovely infidel, how now?
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow?—
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid.”—

XXVIII

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter hung.
 The monarch drank, that happy hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
 When it can say, with godlike voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
 Yet would not James the general eye
 On Nature's raptures long should pry;
 He stepp'd between—“Nay, Douglas, nay,
 Steal not my proselyte away!
 The riddle 'tis my right to read,
 That brought this happy chance to speed.—
 Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
 In life's more low but happier way,
 'Tis under name which veils my power,
 Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured cause.”
 Then, in a tone apart and low,—
 “Ah, little traitress! none must know
 What idle dream, what lighter thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,

Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave
 Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive!"—
 Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"

XXIX

Full well the conscious maiden guess'd
 He prob'd the weakness of her breast;
 But, with that consciousness, there came
 A lightening of her fears for Græme,
 And more she deem'd the monarch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
 Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
 And, to her generous feeling true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
 "Forbear thy suit:—the King of kings
 Alone can stay life's parting wings.
 I know his heart, I know his hand,
 Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand;—
 My fairest earldom would I give
 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!—
 Hast thou no other boon to crave?
 No other captive friend to save?"
 Blushing, she turn'd her from the King,
 And to the Douglas gave the ring,

As if she wish'd her sire to speak
The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek.—
“Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!”—and, at the word,
Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
“For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
Dishonoring thus thy loyal name.—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!”—
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with Nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!

Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,

Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,

And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.

That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,

Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!

'Tis now a Seraph bold, with touch of fire,

'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers ring

Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,

And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—

And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

POET, NOVELIST, HISTORIAN

SIR WALTER SCOTT, the "Wizard of the North" as he was called, was born in Edinburgh, August 15, 1771. He was descended from Walter Scott, a famous chieftain known in border story as "Auld Watt." His father, for whom Walter was named, was by profession a writer to the signet (attorney); his mother, Anne Rutherford, was the daughter of an eminent medical professor in the University of Edinburgh. Owing to an accident in infancy he was rendered lame for life. Much of Scott's childhood was spent on his grandfather's farm at Sandy Knowe in Roxburghshire. His favorite pastime was to sit at the firesides with the country people and listen to scraps of old ballads, stories of border feuds, traditions and superstitions, all of which were laid deep in his wonderful memory.

HIS EDUCATION

For five years he attended the high school of Edinburgh, where, "despite occasional flashes of talent, he shone considerably more as a bold, high-spirited boy with an odd turn for story telling, than as a student." At the age of thirteen he entered the University of Edinburgh. He was never a scholar in the accepted sense of the term, yet he possessed such an amount of history and poetry, collected in his own unsystematic way, as would have enriched his professors. Next to the old ballads, his favorites were Froissart, Boccaccio, Spenser, and Shakespeare. From his earliest childhood he was an insatiable reader and rarely ever forgot any-

thing that he had read. Like Shakespeare, he knew a little Latin and less Greek; but he acquired a serviceable knowledge of French, Italian, Spanish, and German.

AN INDIFFERENT BARRISTER

In 1786 he was apprenticed to the law in his father's office and was admitted to the bar upon attaining his majority. The law had little charm for him; his whole heart was given to poetry. He preferred making excursions over the country gathering ballads and legends, exploring ruins and old camps, and studying the various phases of border life. In view of this habit, his father reproached him as being better fitted for a pedler than for a lawyer.

HIS MARRIAGE

On Christmas eve, 1787, he married Charlotte Margaret Carpenter, the daughter of a French refugee, and they went to housekeeping in a little cottage at Lasswade. Though it was "a bird of paradise mating with an eagle," she made a good wife and the union was a happy one.

FINDING HIS LIFE WORK

Two years after his marriage his father died, and Scott was made Deputy-Sheriff of Selkirkshire on a salary of three hundred pounds a year; and a few years later he was made Clerk of the Session—a position that increased his income to sixteen hundred pounds. He discharged these duties with great fidelity and the income therefrom enabled him to make of literature "a staff and not a crutch," as he was fond of saying. While he was at Lasswade he formed the purpose of rescuing from oblivion the stores of border ballads. His various excursions into the Southern Lowlands brought forth fruit in the form of *The Border Minstrelsy* in three volumes, copiously annotated. He changed his residence to a pleasant farm at Ashiestiel on the banks of the Tweed. Here he lived till Abbotsford was built in 1811. It was at Ashiestiel that Scott appeared before the public as an original romantic poet.

HIS POEMS

As he had published in 1802 a collection of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* and had published a translation of Goethe's drama of feudal history, *Goetz von Berlichingen*, it became Scott's desire to do for Scottish border life what Goethe had done for the ancient feudalism of the Rhine. A legend was sent to him by the Countess of Dalkeith, with a request that he put it in ballad form. He went to work with a will, and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in 1805, was the result. The immediate popularity of this poem was the turning-point in Scott's career—he decided to make literature his profession. In rapid succession followed *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, *The Lord of the Isles*, *The Vision of Don Roderick*, *The Bridal of Triermain*, *Harold the Dauntless*, and *The Field of Waterloo*.

The Lady of the Lake

Lord Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh Review*, says that *The Lady of the Lake* is Scott's finest poem for the following reasons:

1. It is more polished in its diction.
2. It is more regular in its versification.
3. The story is constructed with infinitely more skill and address.
4. There is a greater proportion of pleasing and tender passages.
5. It has less antiquarian detail.
6. It has a larger variety of characters.
7. The characters are more artfully and judiciously contrasted.
8. There is a richness and spirit in the whole piece which does not pervade *Marmion*—a profusion of incident and a shifting brilliancy of coloring that reminds us of *Ariosto*.

The Lady of the Lake is a romantic poem:

1. In its love affairs.
2. In its characters; gallant, chivalrous figures.
3. In its scenery and incidents.
4. In its descriptions.

5. In its picturesqueness.
6. In the time of its action (old feudal days of chivalry).
 - a. Border warfare.
 - b. Trial by battle.
 - c. Prophecy.
 - d. Songs of minstrels.
 - e. Knights and armor.
 - f. Manners and customs.
 - g. Grotesqueness (Fiery Cross).
7. It is fantastic—it appeals to fancy.
8. It is unsympathetic—it interests, but does not appeal to our sympathies.
9. Its unreality.
10. In its plot.

HIS NOVELS

The successful rivalry of Byron, however, turned the poet's thoughts toward a more congenial development of his genius. In 1814 he gave the world the first (*Waverly*) of those wonderful novels, which at once placed him near to the throne of Shakespeare himself. Between 1814 and 1831 he wrote his long series of novels with such facility that, on the average, two appeared each year. During this same period he published many works of criticism, history, and biography.

HIS BUSINESS VENTURES

Fortune showered her favors upon him with a lavish hand. In 1820 he was created a baronet, made a large fortune, and lived at Abbotsford in a sort of fairy-tale prosperity amid the scenes of his earliest fancies and affections. This prosperity, however, proved evanescent. It was Scott's delight to extend and embellish Abbotsford and to entertain his friends there in true princely style. In order to do this he required an enormous income. Scott became a silent partner in the publishing firm of Ballantyne & Company, and by its failure in 1826 he lost everything. At the age of fifty-five Scott found himself in debt to the

amount of \$800,000. He could have taken advantage of the bankrupt laws, but, on the contrary, he gave up Abbotsford and applied himself to the herculean task of paying off this debt by his pen, and so well were his labors rewarded that in 1830 his creditors presented him with his library, furniture, plate, and linen in acknowledgment of his honorable conduct. In the midst of his difficulties his wife died. Four years afterward he had a stroke of paralysis. But the work that he had done and the royalties from his books proved more than sufficient to pay all his debts. In 1831 his physicians ordered him abroad, and a ship of war—the *Burham*, placed at his disposal by the government—conveyed him to Malta and Naples. The change of climate and scenery proved of no avail. The poet insisted on returning to Abbotsford. His last wish was fulfilled. He gazed once more on his home and, surrounded by his children, he fell gently asleep on a golden September afternoon; lulled to that last peaceful slumber by the ripple of his beloved Tweed, which was audible through the open windows of his chamber.

Life “chimed to evensong” early for him. He died at the early age of sixty-one, leaving four children to enjoy the fruits of his labor. Scott’s name can never perish while the language he has enriched remains to preserve the works which are the writer’s true representatives.

CHRONOLOGY OF SCOTT’S POETRY AND PROSE

BALLADS

- 1800. *Eve of St. John.*
- 1802. *Cadyow Castle.*
- 1802–03. *Border Minstrelsy.*

LONG POEMS

- 1805. *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*
- 1808. *Marmion.*
- 1810. *The Lady of the Lake.*

1811. *Vision of Don Roderick.*
 1812. *Rokeby.*
 1813. *The Bridal of Triermain.*
 1815. *The Lord of the Isles.*

NOVELS

1814. *Waverly.* Pretender's Attempt in 1745.
 1815. *Guy Mannering.* Fictional.
 1816. *The Antiquary.* Fictional.
 1816. *The Black Dwarf.* Fictional.
 1816. *Old Mortality.* Rebellion of the Covenanters.
 1818. *Rob Roy.* Fictional.
 1818. *The Heart of Mid-Lothian.* Fictional.
 1819. *The Bride of Lammermoor.* Fictional.
 1819. *The Legend of Montrose.* Civil War in the seventeenth century.
 1820. *Ivanhoe.* Return of Richard Cœur de Lion from Holy Land.
 1820. *The Monastery.* Deposition of Mary Queen of Scots.
 1820. *The Abbot.* The Imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots.
 1821. *Kenilworth.* The reign of Queen Elizabeth.
 1822. *The Pirate.* Fictional.
 1822. *The Fortunes of Nigel.* Reign of James I.
 1823. *Peveril of the Peak.* Reign of Charles II.
 1823. *Quentin Durward.* Louis XI and Charles the Bold.
 1824. *St. Ronan's Well.* Fictional.
 1824. *Redgauntlet.* Fictional.
 1825. *The Betrothed.* Wars of the Welsh Marches.
 1825. *The Talisman.* The Third Crusade.
 1826. *Woodstock.* Civil War and Commonwealth.
 1827. *The Two Drovers.* Fictional.
 1827. *The Highland Widow.* Fictional.
 1827. *The Surgeon's Daughter.* Fictional.
 1827. *Life of Napoleon.*
 1827-30. *Tales of a Grandfather.*

1828. *The Fair Maid of Perth*. Reign of Robert III.
1829. *Anne of Geierstein*. Epoch of the battle of Nancy.
1831. *Count Robert of Paris*. Crusaders at Byzantium.
1831. *Castle Dangerous*. Time of the Black Douglas.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

JAMES V OF SCOTLAND

James V of Scotland, the Knight of Snowdoun in the poem, was born at Linlithgow on April 10, 1512. His father, James IV, with 10,000 of his subjects, was killed in the battle of Flodden Field, and his mother, Margaret, who was a daughter of Henry VII of England, conducted for a short time the regency during the minority of James V. Henry VIII of England was, therefore, the uncle of James V of Scotland. About one year after the death of the king the headstrong and passionate queen-dowager married the young Earl of Angus, the head of the powerful Douglas family. Her marriage put an end to her regency. Margaret, who had made an unpopular alliance with the English faction against the French party in Scotland, fled to England, where she was soon joined by her husband. Both soon became willing instruments in the hands of Henry VIII in his intrigues in Scotland. Parliament then invited the Duke of Albany to come from France and accept the regency. The long minority of James V is one of the gloomiest periods in Scottish history.—The contentions of the rival French and English factions and the private quarrels of the nobles reduced the country to a state of anarchy. Such was the lawless state of the country that it was impossible to travel safely except in armed companies. Albany obtained permission to revisit France, and upon his return after a lapse of a few months found the Hamiltons and the Douglasses at open war. The regency of Albany became so unpopular and so obnoxious to the Scottish nobility that in 1524 he obtained permission to revisit France, but did not return. In the same year, through the intrigues of Henry VIII, the queen-dowager and the Earl of Angus

were restored to power. In the meantime the young king had been placed under the care of the poet Sir David Lyndsay, who instructed him in all manly and liberal accomplishments. In 1524, when James was in his thirteenth year, his mother, through the intrigues of her brother, Henry VIII, had her son placed at the head of the government in order that her faction might govern the kingdom in his name. The Earl of Angus, however, by his intrigues obtained chief control of affairs and kept the young king as a prisoner in his own palace. This was the cause of the enmity of James V against the Douglas family. The young king finally resolved that he would no longer brook the authority of the Earl and escaped from his prison-palace. At the time of his escape James was in his seventeenth year. Angus and his family were banished and their estates declared confiscated. In the meantime the dowager-queen had become tired of her husband, and finally succeeded in obtaining a divorce from him, and married young Henry Stewart, a son of Lord Avondale. Finally, seated upon the throne, James continued the policy of his predecessors in humbling the nobility. He not only expelled the Douglasses, who had entered into a treacherous league with Henry VIII, but severely punished the lawless bordermen, chastised the robbers and disturbers among the Highlanders, and took measures to suppress clan rapine and feudal oppression. His sympathy with the common people and his habit of visiting their homes in disguise procured for him the epithet of "King of the Commons."

On the first day of January, 1537, James was married to Magdalen of Valois, daughter of Francis I of France, but she dying in the following July, he married in June, 1538, Mary of Guise, widow of the Duke of Longueville and sister of the Duke of Guise. These alliances increased the hostility of Henry VIII, and as a natural consequence Scotland became more and more anti-English.

In 1542 Henry VIII declared war against him, and James was obliged to seek assistance from the nobles whom he had humiliated and oppressed. They took arms at his command and were led by him against the English. At first the Scottish Army was successful, but, owing to a spirit of discontent, they refused to

follow up their good fortune. A second expedition proved disastrous to James. While the nobles were willing to support James within his own kingdom, they absolutely refused to follow him across the frontier into English territory. At Solway Moss the Scottish Army was completely routed; 10,000 Scots were taken prisoners or, as some say, went deliberately over to the English. This proved too great a blow for the proud monarch, who retired to Falkland Palace, where he died of a broken heart in December, 1542, in the thirty-first year of his age. He left one legitimate child, the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, who was only a few days old at his death.

JAMES DOUGLAS

The James Douglas of the poem is recognized as Archibald Douglas, of Kilspindie, a relative of an Earl of Angus. Archibald Douglas had been a personal favorite of the king before the disgrace of his family. He was so much recommended to James by his great strength, manly appearance, and skill in every kind of warlike exercise, that he was wont to call him his Graysteil, after the name of a champion in a romance then popular. Archibald, becoming rather an old man and tired of his exile in England, resolved to try the king's mercy. He thought that as they had been so well acquainted formerly, and as he had never offended James personally, he might find favor from their old intimacy. He, therefore, threw himself in the King's way one day as he returned from hunting in the park at Stirling. It was several years since James had seen him, but he knew him at a great distance by his firm and stately step, and said, "Yonder is my Graysteil, Archibald of Kilspindie." But when they met he showed no appearance of recognizing his old servant. Douglas turned and, still hoping to obtain a glance of favorable recollection, ran along by the king's side; and although James trotted his horse hard against the hill, and Douglas wore a heavy shirt of mail under his clothes for fear of assassination, yet Graysteil was at the castle gate as soon as the king. James passed him and entered the castle, but Douglas, exhausted from exertion, sat down at the gate

and asked for a cup of wine. The hatred of the king against the name of Douglas was so well known that no domestic about the court dared procure for the old warrior even this trifling refreshment. The king blamed, indeed, his servants for their discourtesy, and even said that but for his oaths never to employ a Douglas he would have received Archibald of Kilspindie into his service, as he had formerly known him a man of great ability. Yet he sent his commands to his poor Graysteil to retire to France, where he died heartbroken soon afterward.—*Tales of a Grandfather*.

THE PLOT OF THE STORY

The following synopsis of the story of *The Lady of the Lake* is given by Lord Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review* for August, 1810:

FIRST CANTO

The First Canto begins with a description of a stag hunt in the Highlands of Perthshire. As the chase lengthens the sportsmen drop off, till at last the foremost horseman is left alone; and his horse, overcome with fatigue, stumbles and dies. The adventurer, climbing up a craggy eminence, discovers Loch Katrine spread out in evening glory before him. The huntsman winds his horn, and sees, to his infinite surprise, a little skiff, guided by a lovely woman, glide from beneath the trees that overhang the water, and approach the shore at his feet. Upon the stranger's approach she pushes the shallop from the shore in alarm. After a short parley, however, she carries him to a woody island, where she leads him into a sort of sylvan mansion, rudely constructed and hung around with trophies of war and the chase. An elderly lady is introduced at supper; and the stranger, after disclosing himself to be James-Fitz-James, the knight of Snowdoun, tries in vain to discover the name and history of the ladies.

SECOND CANTO

The Second Canto opens with a picture of the aged harper, Allan-bane, sitting on the island beach with the damsel, watching

the skiff which carries the stranger back to land. A conversation ensues, from which the reader gathers that the lady is a daughter of the Douglas, who, being exiled by royal displeasure from court, had accepted this asylum from Sir Roderick Dhu, a Highland chieftain long outlawed for deeds of blood; that this dark chief is in love with his fair *protege*, but that her affections are engaged to Malcolm Græme, a younger and more amiable mountaineer. The sound of distant music is heard on the lake, and the barges of Sir Roderick are discovered proceeding in triumph to the island. Ellen, hearing her father's horn at that instant on the opposite shore, flies to meet him and Malcolm Græme, who is received with cold and stately civility by the lord of the isle. Sir Roderick informs the Douglas that his retreat has been discovered, and that the king (James V), under pretence of hunting, has assembled a large force in the neighborhood. He then proposed impetuously that they should unite their fortunes by his marriage with Ellen, and rouse the whole Western Highlands. The Douglas, seeing that his daughter has repugnances which she cannot overcome, declares that he will retire to a cave in the neighboring mountains until the issue of the king's threat is seen. The heart of Roderick is wrung with agony at this rejection; and when Malcolm advances to Ellen he pushes him violently back, and a scuffle ensues, which is with difficulty appeased by the giant arm of Douglas. Malcolm then withdraws in proud resentment, plunges into the water, and swims over by moonlight to the mainland.

THIRD CANTO

The Third Canto opens with an account of the ceremonies employed in summoning the clan. This is accomplished by the consecration of a small wooden cross, which, with its points scorched and dipped in blood, is carried with incredible celerity through the whole territory of the chieftain. The eager fidelity with which this fatal signal is carried on is represented with great spirit. A youth starts from the side of his father's coffin to bear it forward, and, having run his stage, delivers it to a young bridegroom returning from church, who instantly binds his plaid around

him, and rushes onward. In the meantime Douglas and his daughter have taken refuge in the mountain cave; and Sir Roderick, passing near their retreat on his way to the muster, hears Ellen's voice singing her evening hymn to the Virgin. He does not obtrude on her devotions, but hurries to the place of rendezvous.

FOURTH CANTO

The Fourth Canto begins with some ceremonies by a wild hermit of the clan, to ascertain the issue of the impending war; and this oracle is obtained—that the party shall prevail which first sheds the blood of its adversary. The scene then shifts to the retreat of the Douglas, where the minstrel is trying to soothe Ellen in her alarm at the disappearance of her father by singing a fairy ballad to her. As the song ends the Knight of Snowdown suddenly appears before her, declares his love, and urges her to put herself under his protection. Ellen throws herself on his generosity, confesses her attachment to Græme, and prevails on him to seek his own safety by a speedy retreat from the territory of Roderick Dhu. Before he goes the stranger presents her with a ring, which he says he has received from King James, with a promise to grant any boon asked by the person producing it. As he retreats, his suspicions are excited by the conduct of his guide, and confirmed by the warnings of a mad woman whom they encounter. His false guide discharges an arrow at him, which kills the maniac. The knight slays the murderer; and learning from the expiring victim that her brain has been turned by the cruelty of Sir Roderick Dhu, he vows vengeance. When chilled with the midnight cold and exhausted with fatigue, he suddenly comes upon a chief reposing by a lonely watch-fire; and, being challenged in the name of Roderick Dhu, boldly avows himself his enemy. The clansman, however, disdains to take advantage of a worn-out wanderer; and pledges him safe escort out of Sir Roderick's territory, when he must answer his defiance with his sword. The stranger accepts these chivalrous terms, and the warriors sup and sleep together. This ends the Fourth Canto.

FIFTH CANTO

At dawn the knight and the mountaineer proceed toward the Lowland frontier. A dispute arises concerning the character of Roderick Dhu, and the knight expresses his desire to meet in person and do vengeance upon the predatory chief. "Have then thy wish," answers his guide; and gives a loud whistle. A whole legion of armed men start up from their mountain ambush in the heath; while the chief turns proudly and says, "I am Roderick Dhu." Sir Roderick then by a signal dismisses his men to their concealment. Arrived at his frontier, the chief forces the knight to stand upon his defense. Roderick, after a hard combat, is laid wounded on the ground; Fitz-James, sounding his bugle, brings four squires to his side, and, after giving the wounded chief into their charge, gallops rapidly on toward Stirling. As he ascends the hill to the castle he descries approaching the same place the giant form of Douglas, who has come to deliver himself up to the king in order to save Malcolm Græme and Sir Roderick from the impending danger. Before entering the castle Douglas is seized with the whim to engage in the holiday sports which are going forward outside; he wins prize after prize, and receives his reward from the hand of the prince, who, however, does not condescend to recognize his former favorite. Roused at last by an insult from one of the royal grooms, Douglas proclaims himself, and is ordered into custody by the king. At this instant a messenger arrives with tidings of an approaching battle between the clan of Roderick Dhu and the king's lieutenant, the Earl of Mar; and is ordered back to prevent the conflict by announcing that both Sir Roderick and Lord Douglas are in the hands of their sovereign.

SIXTH CANTO

The last canto opens in the guard room of the royal castle at Stirling at dawn. While the mercenaries are quarreling and singing at the close of a night of debauch, the sentinels introduce Ellen and the minstrel Allan-bane, who are come in search of Douglas. Ellen awes the ruffian soldiery by her grace and liberality, and is

at length conducted to a more seemly waiting place until she may obtain audience with the king. While Allan-bane, in the cell of Sir Roderick, sings to the dying chieftain of the glorious battle which has just been waged by his clansmen against the forces of the Earl of Mar, Ellen, in another part of the palace, hears the voice of Malcolm Græme lamenting his captivity from an adjoining turret. Before she recovers from her agitation she is startled by the appearance of Fitz-James, who comes to inform her that the court is assembled, and the king is at leisure to receive her suit. He conducts her to the hall of presence, round which Ellen casts a timed and eager glance for the monarch. But all the glittering figures are uncovered, and James Fitz-James alone wears his cap and plume. The Knight of Snowdown is the King of Scotland. Struck with awe and terror, Ellen falls speechless at his feet, pointing to the ring, which he has put upon her finger. The prince raises her with eager kindness, declares that her father is forgiven, and bids her ask a boon for some other person. The name of Græme trembles on her lips, but she cannot trust herself to utter it. The king, in playful vengeance, condemns Malcolm Græme to fetters, takes a chain of gold from his own neck, and, throwing it over that of the young chief, puts the clasp in the hand of Ellen.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Show how the diction of poetry differs from that of prose.
2. What was Scott's justification in using so many archaic words?
3. Select several old-fashioned poetic elegancies.
4. Justify the statement of Scott that the interest of *The Lady of the Lake* depended upon the incidents.
5. What royal family used the "broom" as its emblem?
6. Are the characters true to history?
7. In what respects did Scott deviate from the historical narrative of James V?
8. What is the climax of the story?

9. Which do you consider the most heroic act of the Knight of Snowdown?

10. Who is the hero of the poem, and what does he do that is heroic?

11. Gather together all that the poet says of any one character, summarizing each named.

12. What are the chief traits of the heroine's character?

13. Name a series of paintings that may be made from the descriptions in the First Canto.

14. In what respect do Cantos One and Two differ?

15. What impression does the poem give you of Malcolm Gràme?

16. What relics of ancient practice are seen in the Third Canto?

17. Tell the story of Ellen from the beginning of the poem to the end.

18. From the poem select the various exhibitions of Highland hospitality.

19. Who was the Lady of the Lake? Why was she so called?

20. Give a connected story of "the chase": who engaged in it, where it took place, and how it ended.

21. Who were the occupants of "the island," and under what conditions they made it their home?

22. Tell about "the gathering": where it was held, for what purpose, and how the clansmen were notified of the meeting.

23. What was "the prophecy," and who made it? to whom was it given, and how it came to pass.

24. What was the cause of the quarrel between James V and the Douglasses? Between the Lowlanders and the Highlanders?

25. Make a pen-picture of the games at Stirling; of the death of Roderick; of the combat.

26. Select the passages which show the beautiful relation between Ellen and her father.

27. Which predominates in the poem—character sketching, nature study, or dramatic incidents?

28. Make an outline map of the Loch Katrine district, and upon it trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes

and mountains: first to Duncraggan, thence, up the Pass of Leny, to the chapel of St. Bride, at Strath-Ire, along Loch Lubnaig, through Balquidder, Glenfinlas, and Strath-Gartney.

29. What are the leading traits in Ellen's character as shown by what she did and what she said?

30. Relate the story of the Fiery Cross, using the following outline: (1) Its purpose; (2) its fashioning and preparation; (3) its journey; (4) the response to its appearance.

31. What was the prophecy of Brian the hermit?

32. Describe the scene that followed Roderick Dhu's whistle when he summoned followers to appear before James Fitz-James.

33. Relate events that led to killing Blanche of Devan.

34. Write a characterization of the person that you like best.

35. Cite three instances from the deeds of Roderick Dhu that show he was "the terror of Loch Lomond's side."

36. Describe Malcolm Græme or the court of James Fitz-James.

37. Give an account of the combat between James Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu.

38. What were the characteristics of Roderick Dhu that made him the leader of his clan?

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